GLAD TIDINGS.

"FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND."

THIS GOSPEL IS PREACHED,
NOT AS IS COMMONLY SUPPOSED, CONCERNING THE CHURCH, NOR CONCERNING THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION:
BUT CONCERNING THE FUTURE STATE, AFTER THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, IN THE WORLD TO COME.

"Being grieved that they taught the people and preached through Jesus the Resurrection from the dead."

Acts 4: 2.

BY HENRY DANA WARD.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the beginning of the world, God made all things very good. (Gen. 1 : 31.)

By Adam's sin, death and the curse came on all the earth. (Gen. 3 : 17. Rom. 5 : 17. and 8 : 22.)

By righteousness the second Adam has obtained the promise of the restitution of all things, in the resurrection of the dead to eternal life, of which all the holy prophets testify since the world began, under the sceptre of Messiah, in his everlasting kingdom. (Acts 3 : 19. Is. 9 : 6. Zech. 6 : 12.

The Old Testament prophesies, and the New Testament evangelizes of this heavenly king, MESSIAH, coming in his glorious kingdom. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy, (Rev. 19 : 10.) and the theme of the Gospel is the same Jesus and the resurrection, or the kingdom of heaven.

The Gospel is the good news of the king's coming in his kingdom. The Gospel cannot be concurrent with the kingdom : the dispensation of the news ceases, when the dispensation of the kingdom begins.

That the kingdom of heaven is at hand, is the leading news of the Gospel, and is the key note of the Gospel; which is altogether marred by the word : " His church is that kingdom of heaven." For were it so, men should say " Lo here, and lo there is the Son of Man. See here is his kingdom." (Luke 17 : 23.)

The doctrine of the kingdom of heaven at hand, and drawing near, has a direct bearing on the conscience of every believer; while the doctrine that the church is that kingdom, has no power to convert the heart. All the triumphs of the primitive church were wrought and won in the clear faith of the near coming of the kingdom of heaven : and what new movement in the modern church is made without a view to the same end, even the near coming of the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ? (Mat. 3 : 5; and 4 : 25. Acts 2 : 36. and 10 : 42; and 17 : 18, 31; and 23 : 6; and 24 : 28; and 28 : 23.)

The kingdom of heaven must be at hand, and still drawing near, because we are no where informed in the Gospel, that it has come, since

it began to be preached at hand. And no man may change the word of God; unless he can show Gospel warrant. (Rev. 22: 18.) (Gal. 1: 8. "If we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you—let him be accursed.")

The Lord Jesus has three offices, Prophet, Priest, and King, of which he finished the first on the cross. (John 19: 30) The second he is fulfilling in glory. (1 John 2: 1. Heb. 8: 4.) And the third is in the kingdom of heaven yet to come. (Heb. 10: 12, 37; and 2: 68.)

The kingdom of heaven is drawing near, because it is constantly prayed for in the words of the King: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as in heaven." Mat. 6: 10. And we may expect the answer according to 2 Pet. 3: 13; and Is. 65: 17, in eternal life.

The Gospel enjoins repentance for the express reason, that the kingdom of heaven is at hand: It is a sound legal maxim "If the reason ceases, the law ceases." And by the same rule, if the kingdom of heaven ceases to be at hand, the law of repentance should cease to be enforced, which is absurd.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand and drawing near; because the curse is not removed from the earth; and the Gospel is our glad tidings, that the God of peace will bruise Satan under the feet of the faithful, shortly; (Rom. 16: 20.) and that "there shall be no more curse." (Rev. 22: 3.)

The modern doctrine of the church's being this kingdom, and of the Gospel's being glad tidings of itself, instead of the kingdom of heaven, is an invention of Egypt, adopted into the church by the Man of sin, which was not received before the general apostacy of the church.

The whole Gospel is one instrument, or sweet piece of heavenly music, which has its key note, the same which the Lord our King himself first struck with exalted voice; and which alone he gave his Apostles charge to sound aloud in all Judea, and to the ends of the earth: οτι ηγγικε η Βασιλεια των ουρανων "*For the kingdom of heaven has drawn near.*" This is the key note of the Gospel, to which, if due attention is paid, all other Gospel notes will harmonize with sweet symphony, and brotherly love and concord may be restored, where now discord and confusion reign among the followers of the Lord.

And what am I, that it should fall on me to recall the scattered flock of Christ from following after many names, to return, in the unity of the spirit, to "the faith once delivered to the saints!" (Jude 3.) A sinful man, having hope only in the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. But notwithstanding my utter unworthiness, it pleased the Most High, on a former occasion, to discover through me to the world

the grossness of the imposture, which palmed itself on mankind, in the name of all the saints and sages of antiquity, for the work of the wisest man, and for the light of heaven, and for the thing next best to our holy religion: and to bring to public view the singular fact, that an institution of so proud claims, and embracing on its roll the most illustrious names of this and of the past age, in both civil and ecclesiastical life, had not its own name known in the literature of any people before the seventeenth century. Those who recollect the spirit and power and understanding, and many friends the Lord gave me ten years ago, to contend with the dragon of Freemasonry (which institution has now the public seal of character then stamped upon it in the Antimasonic Review,) will believe that I come not rashly before the public, to speak what the Lord has showed me, *in his word*, respecting the Kingdom of his glory and eternal life.

What is the kingdom of his glory, except it be the state of restitution of all things, which Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets agree with the Gospel to promise; when God shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, (Acts 3: 20,) and "he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end!" (Luke 1: 33.) It is the kingdom of Jesus and of the resurrection of the dead, which Paul preached and for the hope of which he was bound, and imprisoned, and tried for his life, before both Jews and Romans.

"Preach the preaching that I bid thee" is the word to Jonah; "and as ye go, Preach, saying: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:" is the Lord's word to his ministers, the Apostles. No man may change that word for any equivalent.

But some of the practical value of the true doctrine of the kingdom may be learned from the consideration, that any word of God to be fruitful in the heart must be received into the understanding, as well as the ears. The kingdom being understood to be the Gospel dispensation, throws the great doctrines of repentance, faith, salvation, and the resurrection, into inextricable confusion; and constrains the preacher to encumber them with a load of unprofitable matter, and through them to darken the hearer's mind with thick clouds of human theology, instead of pouring into it a flood of heavenly light, through the good news of the kingdom of heaven at hand, by which the simplest child may be enabled to understand the duty of repentance, the life of faith, the joy of salvation, and the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

Multiplied divisions and dissensions between brethren grow out of the present error, respecting the church, as the kingdom of heaven,

which fall and vanish before the true light of the coming king in his kingdom : a light no less strong and powerful to arrest the attention of the impenitent, than to dissipate the mazy errors of the household of faith ; and also to bring home to the heart and understanding of the ignorant heathen, the entire word of God, even through the doctrine of the kingdom of Jesus and of heaven at hand. Death is an object that man learns to regard with indifference : but not so the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom. An argument so vast, mysterious, and overwhelming, no mortal can admit, and still despise it. The world is of little value to him, Christian or Pagan, who believes that Messiah is drawing near in his kingdom, to purify all things by fire, to cast the wicked into hell, and to give reward to his saints. and to all that fear his name, both small and great.

This is the faith once delivered to the saints, and it is still mighty to overthrow the powers of darkness. For the first three centuries it triumphed ; and again the Spirit of truth will seal it with power upon all hearts ; whether to convict the unbelieving, or to break the believer's grasp from this perishing world.

GLAD TIDINGS.

In this effort to explain the doctrine of Christ, I regard the kingdom of this world, under God, in the hands of the Enemy who wrought the fall and ruin of this world. Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from *this present evil world*," (Gal. 1 : 4.) and give us an inheritance with him in "*the world to come.*" (Heb. 2: 5, and 6: 5.) "The whole world lieth in wickedness:" (1 John 5: 19.) and the promises in Christ all show, that, in the appointed time, he will take the dominion from the Adversary, and will destroy this world in its wickedness, and make all things new, in the resurrection of the dead, and the kingdom of heaven in the world to come.

This is the Gospel of God, *Evangellion*, the good news of the kingdom, that the ruin made by the Serpent, sin, and death, shall be consummated in the righteous judgment of God upon the Devil, and his followers, and his works, by our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose coming this heaven and earth shall perish: "and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed." (Heb. 1: 12.) Then a new order of things will arise, with the dead out of the graves, called "the restitution of all things," in the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet 3: 13.) This is eternal life.

And God has raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, and exalted him to his own right hand in glory; and has sent the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name, for the strong assurance of the believer, that the times of reviving shall soon come from the

presence of the Lord, "and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you;" (Acts 3: 20.) with power and great glory, to change this present world into the world to come, which is to be without end, and capable of affording to all saints, with faithful Abraham, an everlasting possession, in that city whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. 11: 10 to 16.)

JESUS, OUR LORD, THE APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Heb. 1: 1, 2.) He made this world, lovely as the garden of Eden. The Serpent, by Adam's disobedience, brought sin and death and the curse, not only upon Adam and his race; but on the whole world, and all things in it; of which our Lord Jesus is the appointed heir: not to receive and possess in the fallen state; not to inherit in the condition the Serpent has placed it, with sin in the heart, corruption in the flesh, poison in the air, and the briar out of the ground; but to take it wholly from the dominion of the Adversary; and, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, (Eph. 1.) to make all things new. This is the promise of God spoken to the fathers by the prophets; this is the Gospel preached unto us by his Son, the Gospel of the kingdom of heaven.

By his word, who is more honorable than all men, and is incapable of deceit, we have assurance, that God speaking at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers by the prophets, always foretold the coming and kingdom of his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things. For it is also written, that, when he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High, according to

this invitation: "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Heb. 10: 12.)

The time how long he sits upon his Heavenly Father's throne, is definitely marked and bounded by the word "until," and by the event following, which is the subjugation of all his enemies. We are not left by Holy Writ in any doubt, whether that time has come, our experience and observation alike agreeing with the word: "But now we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 2: 8.)

The word of God which he spake by the prophets to the fathers, mainly regards the future coming of the Lord in glory, with the angels, to take possession of his inheritance, and to rule over all nations of the quick and dead: as it is written of him after his ascension: "whom the heavens must receive (*retain*) until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken, *by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began.*" (Acts 3: 21.)

It is impossible for God to lie. He is more honorable than any king or potentate; and what he says, he plainly means: what he speaks by the mouth of his prophets, he will strictly verify and perform to the letter: not one jot nor tittle of his word shall fail. And when he declares, as above, that he has spoken by the mouth of all his prophets, concerning this restitution of all things, it plainly identifies this restitution with the kingdom of heaven, which is the same thing in fact, presented in divers aspects, whether it be called the restitution of all things, or the new heavens and new earth, or the resurrection of the dead, or eternal life, or the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven, or be called the kingdom of God, or of Messiah, or of heaven. By all these names, the mind is led to regard the same eternal state, as by the names Jesus, Immanuel, Savior, Christ, and Messiah, the mind is led to regard the same eternal king. The various names unfold various views; but they all belong, and many more with them, to the same heavenly king in his kingdom.

THE FAITH BY OUR LORD ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

It is said that the word spoken to the fathers by the prophets, God "hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." (Heb. 1: 2.) Now, what hath God spoken to us by his Son, in common with all the prophets, unless it relates to that restitution and kingdom of all things, of which Jesus is "the appointed heir?" The word which Jesus began to preach and to say, and which, every where as he went, he continually preached, was this surely: "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mat. 4: 17.) "And Jesus went about all Gallilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." (Mat. 4: 23.) "He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities." (Mat. 11: 1.) "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." (Mat. 9: 35.) "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, for therefore came I forth." (Mat. 1: 38.) "He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God." (Luke 8: 1.)

Plainly, the word which in these last days God hath spoken to us by his Son relates wholly to the kingdom of heaven: "for to this end was I born, (said our Lord before Pilate) and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth:" (John 18: 37) that the kingdom of heaven draws near, of which the Son of Man is the appointed heir.

It was not only in person, but also by the apostles, that our Lord preached his heavenly kingdom. Having chosen them, he sent them forth with many directions for their own government, and with great power over diseases and demons; but with only one message to preach, which was this: "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the reign of

the Messiah draws near. The seventy also he sent by two and two, with only the same word, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." And neither they, nor the twelve, had any other word given them to say, but only this, although men should scoff at the word, and reject the preachers: "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you; notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." (Luke 10: 11. Mat. 10: 14.) "And they went out, and preached that men should repent." (Mark 6: 12.) "He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." (Luke 9: 2.) "And they went through the towns, preaching the gospel every where." (Luke 9: 6.)

The word "repent" is omitted in the charge to the apostles; but it is added in the history of their preaching; so that the same words were used by our Lord, and by his disciples, to publish the glad tidings of his kingdom; diseases and devils being made subject to his ambassadors. The original words used by John Baptist are: *Μετανοειτε ηγγικε γαρ η Βασιλεια των ουρανων*: and they were used by our Lord. The charge to the disciples is to preach: *Οτι ηγγικεν η Βασιλεια των ουρανων.* (Mat. 10: 7.) Luke writes it: *Ηγγικεν εφ υμας η Βασιλεια του Θεου.* Mark says: Jesus came into Gallilee preaching the kingdom of God, and saying: the time is fulfilled and *ηγγικεν η Βασιλεια του Θεου· μετανοειτε και πιστευετε εν τω ευαγγελιω.*

Thus we are taught the use of the word *Gospel*, and the true nature of the repentance and faith, enjoined in the New Testament. *To repent* is to bethink one's self, in view of the fact that the kingdom of heaven draws near: and *to believe* in this fact, is the faith, which works by love and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

THE GOSPEL FIRST LIMITED TO THE JEWS, WHO WORSHIPPED AT JERUSALEM.

The original words, which are common to the Evangelists, relating the call and commission of the twelve Apostles, are these two: ηγγικε and Βασιλεια. All the others are convertible terms, or words not essential to the main fact in the Gospel. By Βασιλεια, or kingdom, is meant regal sway, or royal administration; and it refers to Messiah's administration, according to the common sense of the people who heard the word from the lips of our Lord; and according to the common sense of succeeding ages to this present time. By ηγγικε is meant *draws near*, or has drawn near. It is translated in Matthew, "is at hand:" and in Luke, "is come nigh." It is one and the same word in the original, and indicates a state of approach, in which the subject of action is already near, and is approaching nearer. Putting the two ideas together, we have the gospel message in this form: Messiah's administration has come near. Mark adds: "Repent, and believe in the glad tidings." "The regal sway of the Son of man has approached near:" that is the burden of the message, and the main fact stated in the words of the gospel.

In this form and sense it is admitted on all hands, that the Lord Jesus preached the word, and gave it to the twelve and to the seventy to preach. And one remarkable change in the manner of publishing it, is also by all admitted; viz. that the Lord limited the annunciation of this gospel to the Jews with great strictness, until after his resurrection. He did not preach to the Gentiles. With a severity wholly unlike himself, he refused at first and again, the gentile mother who besought his aid for her afflicted daughter; and he charged his apostles, not even to go in the way of the Gentiles; but to turn from a road in which it would be neces-

sary to walk with them, and not to enter into any city of the Samaritans, although they might pass along their high ways; "but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Mat. 10: 5, 6.)

All his preaching of his kingdom, all his parables illustrating the nature of that kingdom, and all the fearful array of the nations before his throne, in the day of his coming in his kingdom, when he will separate them as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats, the Lord put forth under the limitation of the law of Moses, only to the people of Israel. So he spoke the word, so he charged the apostles to preach it, and so the people understood it, at his mouth: in proof of which it is written, that the multitude cried Hosanna! before him, and spread their garments with palm branches in the way: and the disciples confessed with sore disappointment, "but we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." (Luke 24: 21.) They were perfectly right in their trust, only they had not understood two things; *first*, that it was necessary for Christ to suffer; *second*, that Israel is not reckoned according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

Therefore, the promises were made only to Abraham and his seed; and the law was given only to the descendants of Jacob; and the Gospel was preached and limited to the Jews and proselytes only who worshipped at Jerusalem. For if any of the Samaritans hoped in the Messiah, it was through the prophets and the passing discourses of our Lord and his apostles. The Gospel was not sent to them at first. And in conformity with this strict limitation, the Gospel was preached in all the personal ministry of the Lord and of his apostles, to the Jews who worshipped at Jerusalem only; until several years after his ascension. It is true that he told his disciples, before his ascension, to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; (Mark 16: 15.) but they did not understand it. For eleven years after they

confined their ministry to the Jews and proselytes, either in Judea, or among the dispersed Jews in the cities of the Gentiles. What is most extraordinary in this connexion, Paul himself, though called by the special manifestation of the Lord from heaven, and instructed from the first, that he was to go to the Gentiles, was some eight years a minister of the gospel, confining his labors wholly to the Jews among the Gentiles, before the Lord opened the eyes of the apostles, to see the extent of his great mercy and dying love, embracing also the Gentiles. Paul was converted four years after the Lord's resurrection; and Peter was sent to preach the gospel to Cornelius, eight years after Paul's conversion, and in the twelfth year after the Lord's resurrection.*

* Since writing the above, I have seen a "*Word of warning in the last days*," by the Rev. William W. Pym, England, in which the common Bible date of the conversion of Cornelius, A. D. 41, is put down for the year A. D. 38.

According to the common era, (which is said to be four years in advance of true time,) it would be only eight years after the resurrection, to the conversion of Cornelius: but by the Bible chronology, it was twelve years.

Any attempt to be very accurate in ancient dates, only perplexes me; therefore, while I respect the efforts of others on this point, I am a poor judge of their value; except that leading dates to the near termination of long and fearful periods, may be found in the prophets with sufficient clearness, to awaken the deepest interest in any sensible observer of the word, and of the times.

In regard to Mr. *Pym's* date of the call of the Gentiles, it seems to turn on the signification of the word *Grecians*, as applied to certain residents of Jerusalem, (Acts 9: 29,) and also of Antioch. (Acts 11: 20.) Were they Greeks of truth, or Jews of Greek language and birth-place? Mr. Pym supposes the former. A very strong fact in support of the common date of the call of the Gentiles, is that the alms of the church of Antioch were sent by Barnabas and Paul to the brethren in Judea in view of a famine which was foretold by Agabus, and which, it is added, came on the world in the days of Claudius Cesar. Now, Claudius did not come to the throne, until eleven or twelve years after the ascension of our Lord. On this same mission of charity, Barnabas and Paul had in charge to inquire, if it were necessary that the Gentiles should be circumcised. And if that was the second time of Paul's visiting Jerusalem, after his conversion then he has himself marked the time, at fourteen years after. (Gal. 2. 1.) This does not diminish the mystery of the call of the Gentiles.

This was a great mystery to the Jews, that the Gentiles should be made partakers with them in the promises: "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him." (Rom. 10: 12.) And much of our interest in the Holy Scriptures depends on our keeping in view the important fact, that the law and the prophets and the gospel were addressed to the *Jews* only; and that we have no part in *Israel*, except through faith in Jesus Christ, by whom we have the adoption, and not only Abraham to be our Father, but the God of Abraham to be our Father, and Christ our elder brother, being made joint heirs with him, in the world to come. Not having this great truth in mind, Christians are blinded by the words of limitation to Israel and Jacob, which are common to the Bible, even in the gospel; but which the New Testament instructs us to understand of the spiritual seed, and not of the flesh.

I cannot now pursue this subject, but it is full of interest, and worthy of deep investigation; for, if I mistake not, Christians reject against themselves large portions of the word of God, because those portions are addressed particularly to the Jews, and priests and scribes and pharisees and inhabitants of Jerusalem; when all our hope is in the promises first made only to them; but in the resurrection of Jesus, extended to all nations: which extension will be found, I think, to cover, not the gospel only, but also the Prophets.

AUTHORITY FOR A CHANGE IN THE GOSPEL, SO FAR AS TO EMBRACE THE GENTILES.

But while this change is admitted in the persons to whom the Gospel was preached, on the authority of the Master himself, who first limited, and afterward enlarged the joyful sound, to embrace all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; it

does not appear that any change was made in the Gospel itself. He who said repent; for the kingdom of heaven has come near; and who sent forth his apostles to preach the same words, to the Jews only; and of whom it is written that he went about all Gallilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom; (Mat. 4: 23.) and about all the cities and villages preaching the gospel of the kingdom; (Mat. 9: 35.) and throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; (Luke 8: 1.) also sent the apostles through the towns preaching the gospel every where to the Jews only; until he had by his death broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, making both one; after which he carefully enlarged the circle of the gospel, particularly charging his disciples in these words: Go ye, therefore, and *disciple* all nations—teaching them to keep all things whatsoever I have commanded you. (Mat. 28: 19, 20.) "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16: 15.) "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures; and said unto them—that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24: 45, 47.)

This is ample warrant for the change in the persons to whom the gospel should be afterward preached: but is any change made in the terms of the gospel? It is the same gospel precisely which was before preached unto the Jews only, now preached unto all nations. No intimation is given of any change in the nature of Messiah's kingdom, either in regard to the time, or manner of its coming: the gospel is the gospel of that kingdom still, and not a word is said, to show any change in the conditions of the message, either that men should not be required to repent, or that the kingdom of heaven had already come.

When he charged them: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," it must be the same gospel which he had previously instructed them to preach to the Jews only. And when he charged them to disciple all nations, it must be understood, that he would have them instruct all nations in the duty of repentance, and the faith of his kingdom having come nigh unto them, as he had himself instructed the Jews. And when he would have the nations keep and observe all things whatsoever he had commanded the apostles, certainly this was included, which he first commanded them, and committed particularly to them, to be enjoined upon all others: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This conclusion is irresistible, unless some exception is made, by which this word is taken out from among "all things whatsoever" the Lord Jesus had enjoined upon the apostles, and Jews. And when he taught them that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, he explains the character of his kingdom, that it is prepared for the believer, who is justified by faith in Messiah the king, and whose sins shall be blotted out, in the day when the Lord will judge the world in righteousness, and punish the transgressors: that they should preach repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus; the repentance to be carried by faith through this life, in the hope of remission of sins in eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven.

A FEARFUL THING TO CHANGE "THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL."

This is the testimony of Jesus: "*the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" This is "the faith once delivered to the saints:" *once for all* delivered to the saints: *only once*, and never but once, delivered to the apostles, and never yet changed.

(Jude 3.) This is the gospel of the kingdom, "the everlasting gospel," (Rev. 14: 6,) which began to be preached by John Baptist, and which is the theme of the angel flying through the midst of heaven, and saying with a loud voice unto all nations: Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come. (Rev. 14: 7.) This is that form of doctrine which was delivered to the Romans, and which they obeyed from the heart. (Rom. 6: 17.) This is that form of sound words which Paul exhorts Timothy to hold fast. (2 Tim. 1: 13.) This is that good confession which Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate. (1 Tim. 6: 13.) "My kingdom is not of this world—now is my kingdom not from hence—thou sayest that I am a king." John 18: 36, 37.

Nevertheless, it has come to pass in our day, that the commentators cease to teach the kingdom of heaven at hand, the kingdom of Messiah drawing very near; but they all agree nearly with one voice to say: "The kingdom of heaven is come unto you: it is the church; it is the gospel dispensation." And if reminded of the original form of sound words, and exhorted to hold fast that form, and to contend earnestly for the faith *never but once* delivered to the saints; they stoutly reply: "Be sure of this: the kingdom of heaven has come eighteen hundred years ago."

They declare this without sufficient warrant of holy writ. The Lord says: The kingdom of heaven has come near. These say: The kingdom of heaven has come centuries since. And so they teach young men to preach, not the preaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor that which he bade the apostles to preach, but another form of words, even another doctrine, which has been discovered and introduced among the faithful, since the age of the apostles.

It is not a light thing to change the word of God, and substitute a message in man's judgment somewhat better. It is a fatal thing to put an unhallowed hand to the ark. It is a fearful thing to preach any other glad tidings than Jesus

preached; a fearful thing to pervert the gospel of Christ. (Gal. 1: 7.) "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken to my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him: but the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, even that prophet shall die."—(Num. 18: 19.)

No word of God commands men to preach, or to teach, the kingdom of heaven already come; on the contrary, it strictly enjoins them to preach the kingdom of heaven drawing near; to preach the *gospel* of the kingdom, the glad tidings of the kingdom, the good news of the kingdom of Jesus at hand and drawing very near. The good Lord defend his prophets from speaking a word in his name, which he has not commanded them to speak: for how shall he, who rejected his ancient people for refusing to hear that prophet, not be very angry with the Gentiles, if they presume to speak in his name, an important word, which he has not commanded them to speak?

The traditions of the elders, and the folios of the commentators, teach some things which it is no more safe in this age to adopt and follow, than it was in the days when the Lord openly rebuked the scribes and pharisees; "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Mat. 15: 9.)

The commandment of God is to all men every where to repent. This duty is incumbent on man, so long as the race of Adam is propagated: and the Lord applied an everlasting argument to induce repentance, which argument will stand the test of time, the scrutiny of the commentators, and the wreck of the world: "Bethink yourselves; *for the kingdom* of heaven has come near;" was his own word in the beginning of the gospel:

"Fear God; and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment *is come*," is the word of the last angel of the gospel. (Rev. 14: 7.)

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN THE FOUR GOSPELS.

Ordinary minds and common readers never suspect that the church is the kingdom of heaven. The common sense of mankind is sufficient to understand, that the kingdom of Messiah is a state of great power and glory, in view of which men should bethink themselves, and turn from their evil ways. They know that in the church, in the gospel dispensation, there is neither power nor glory to induce repentance, and to convert the sinner's heart, or to change the worldling into a child of God, to turn men from the vain pursuits of time and sense, to seek first the kingdom of heaven, to turn the heathen from the worship of idols to serve the living God, and to turn sinful men from Satan to God. Common people understand this. But the learned scribes are instructed to believe, that verily the church is that kingdom, in view of which the Lord commanded all Judea and Jerusalem and Gallilee to repent, to bethink themselves, and turn unto God; and none are accustomed to doubt it in this age, any more than they were accustomed three centuries ago, to doubt the efficacy of the intercessions of the blessed virgin. The opinion has come down from high antiquity unchallenged. And the church is taken among divines of all sects, to be the kingdom of the gospel, with the same confidence that Jesus our Lord is taken to be the king of the heavenly kingdom.

That the reader may behold with me the truth on this point, I will rehearse every sentence in the four gospels, in which the Greek word, *Βασιλεια*, kingdom, occurs; and let him substitute church in its stead, and see what nonsense this reading would make of the holy word, in the most solemn and interesting exhibitions of divine truth.

"Repent, for *the kingdom of heaven*, (the church?) is at hand." (Mat. 3: 2, and 4: 17, and 10: 7. Mark 1: 14, 15.)

"Preaching the gospel of the *kingdom*, and healing all manner of sickness." (Mat. 4: 23, and 9: 35.)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is *the kingdom of heaven.*" (Mat. 5: 3.) [Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the church!]

"Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in *the kingdom of heaven:* but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in *the kingdom of heaven.* For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into *the kingdom of heaven.*" [The church?] (Mat 5: 19, 20.)

"Thy kingdom come." (Mat. 6: 10. Luke. 11: 2.)

"For thine is the kingdom." (Mat. 6: 13.)

Let it be remembered, that a kingdom does not come, on earth, except in the overthrow of one administration, or line of heirs, and in the establishment of another. The kingdom of England came to Ireland, when England's king with a powerful army passed over to Ireland, and subdued it, and made the English law the law of Ireland. And the kingdom of heaven will come with the king of glory and the armies of the heavenly host in the clouds, to expel the tyrant god of this world, and to destroy his strong hold in the heart of flesh, and to administer the law of heaven in the resurrection of the dead and in eternal life.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." (Mat. 6: 33.)

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the *kingdom of heaven.*" (Mat. 7: 21.) These, however, enter the church.

"Many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in *the kingdom of heaven:* but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and

gnashing of teeth. (Mat. 8: 11, 12.) (Luke 13: 28, 29.)

"Among men that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." (Mat. 11: 11. Luke 7: 28.) The amazing stupidity which takes the church for the kingdom of heaven proclaimed in the New Testament, may be pardoned for interpreting this text to mean, that every child, or dotard, or weaker vessel in the church, under the Gospel dispensation, is greater, in the Lord's esteem, than this most eminent Saint. To such an extremity of folly most of the commentators go, on this text, which any sensible child will more correctly expound of the future state, in the world to come.

"From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Mat. 11: 12. Luke 16: 16.) The church suffereth not this violence.

"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.—If Satan cast out Satan,—how shall then his kingdom stand? But if I cast out devils by the spirit of God, *then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*" *αρα εφθασεν εφ' υμας η Βασιλεια του Θεου* (Mat. 12: 25. Luke 11: 20.) *Εφθασεν prevenit; has come beforehand unto you.*

"It is given to you to know the mysteries of *the kingdom of heaven.*" Mat. (13: 11.) "When any one heareth the word of *the kingdom.*" (Mat. 13: 19. Mark 4: 11. Luke 8: 10.)

"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field." v. 25. (Mark 4: 26.)

"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed." v. 31. "Is like unto leaven." v. 33. (Mark 4: 30. Luke 13: 18, 20.)

"The field is the world, the good seed are the *children* of the kingdom." v. 38. They are *citizens* of the kingdom in the world to come.

"So shall it be in the end of the world; the son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom, all things that offend." v. 40, 41. This is the judgment and not the church.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." v. 42. This is eternal life, and not the church.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field." v. 44. A thing earnestly to be desired and sought for: but the church is not hid.

"Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls." v. 45.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind, which when it was full, they drew to the shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." v. 47 to 51. This in the judgment.

"Every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven." v. 52.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 16: 19.)

Searching five years ago for the foundation of the Pope's claims to supremacy, I was led carefully to consider this text; and here I first discovered, that the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven's being the church, is admirably calculated to provide the triple crown with a wide dominion: but that the kingdom of heaven is the future state, the world to come, of whose *keys* Peter alone has the promise; and in the Gospel he has only the promise. This view disarms the Pope of his keys at once and forever.

"There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." (Mat. 16: 28. Mark 9: 1. Luke 9: 27.) Peter, James,

and John in the mount of transfiguration "were eye witnesses of his majesty." (2 Pet. 1 : 16.)

"Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?—Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. [church?] Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself, as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 18 : 1, 3, 4. Mark 10 : 15. Luke 18 : 17.)

"There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." (Mat. 19 : 12.)

"Suffer little children and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 19 : 14. Mark 10 : 14. Luke 18 : 16.) The future state.

"A rich man shall hardly enter into *the kingdom of heaven.* And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into *the kingdom* of God." [the church?] (Mat. 19 : 23, 24. Luke 18 : 24, 25.) The connection here plainly shows that by *the kingdom of heaven* "eternal life" is intended, and by no means the church: for the question of the young man, that gave rise to these remarks, was this: "Good master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man, that is a householder." (Mat. 20 : 1.)

"Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom." (Mat. 20 : 21.)

"The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." (Mat. 21 : 31.) But not into the church.

"The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Mat. 21 : 43.) This word is spoken to all nations in the flesh, in favor of the nation which the earth shall bring forth at once, even in the resurrection of the dead.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son." (Mat. 22: 2.)

"Wo unto you, scribes, pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men." (Mat. 23: 13.)

"And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." (Mat. 24: 14.) The end of the Gospel, and of this world.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins:" (Mat. 25: 1,) which is the Lord's coming to judgment: so likewise the Parable of the ten talents which follows it; and is itself followed by the account of the Lord's coming.

"Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand; come ye blessed of my Father, inherit *the kingdom* prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Mat. 25: 34.) This is the sublime description of the judgment scene.

"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Mat. 26: 29. Mark 14: 25. Luke 22: 18.)

Such is the manner in which the Gospel according to Matthew uses the word kingdom, meaning the kingdom of God, of Messiah, and of heaven in the future state; and taken to mean in the first use of the word, by the ages of the Man of sin, *the Church, and the Gospel dispensation.* In any case above quoted, a transposition of the word *church*, or *Gospel dispensation*, into the place of the word *kingdom*, would make the sentence barbarous, and the sense for the most part positively absurd, and even ridiculous; but transpose the same word kingdom, for the word *resurrection* or judgment, eternal life, future state, or world to come, and nearly the whole power of the sentiment, and dignity of the expression, and efficacy of the word is preserved. This furnishes out of the Scripture itself a perfectly safe exposition of the true meaning of the word "kingdom of heaven," as

preached by our Lord and his apostles, and every where used in the New Testament.

"It is better for thee to enter into *the kingdom of God* with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." (Mark 9: 47.) Here the kingdom of God is synonymous with eternal life.

"Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest." (Mark 11: 10.)

"Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12: 34.)

"Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which, also, waited for the kingdom of God." (Mark 15: 43.)

"And of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1: 33.)

"I must go preach the kingdom of God to other cities also." (Luke 4: 43.)

"Blessed be ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God." (Luke 6: 20.)

"He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God." [the church?] (Luke 8: 1.)

"And he received them, and spake unto them of *the kingdom of God*, and healed them that had need of healing." (Luke 9: 11.)

"Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." [the church?] (Luke 9: 60.)

"No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9: 62.)

"Say unto them: The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." (Luke 10: 9, 11.)

"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God. It is your

Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12: 31, 32.)

"Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." (Luke 14: 15.

"He was demanded of the pharisees, when *the kingdom of God* should come. [the church?] He answered them and said: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, lo here! or lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." [the church?] (Luke 17: 20, 21.)

"There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for *the kingdom of God's sake;* who shall not receive manifold more in this present time; and in the world to come, *life everlasting.*" (Luke 18: 29, 30.) ["Life everlasting" in this sentence is correspondent with "the kingdom of God" in the same sentence.]

"Because they thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.—And when he was returned, having received the kingdom." (Luke 19: 11, 12, 15.) How plainly is this that kingdom which our Lord preached; and for which we pray: "Thy kingdom come:" and this nobleman is our Lord, whose death we show in the breaking of bread and drinking of the cup, until he returns, "having received the kingdom." And then is the judgment, when he reckons with his servants, and gives to every man his reward, both to the diligent and to the slothful, to the just and to the unjust!

"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21: 31.)

"I appoint unto you a kingdom; as my Father hath appointed unto me: that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22: 29, 30.)

"Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom." (Luke 23: 42.) The thief could not mistake the church for Messiah's kingdom; nor can we mistake his hope of that kingdom in *the future state.*

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.—Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3: 3, 5.)

"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered unto the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18: 36.) Were the Lord in the world now, those who are called by his name would fight for him quick; no more doubting that his kingdom is *in* this world, than consenting that it is not *of* this world.

Columbus's mode of balancing the egg on the tip, was not more simple, and effectual, and satisfactory, than this mode of settling the meaning of the words, *the kingdom of God* and of heaven, proclaimed in the Gospel; and of showing that they mean not the church at all, nor the Gospel dispensation; but always the future state, or eternal life, or the world to come, or some equivalent idea, worthy to be the beginning of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and able to convert the believer's heart from the desire of this world, to the strong desire after that holiness without which no man shall see God. It is set forth as the reward of the faithful, the object of righteous pursuit through life, and of endless enjoyment in the future state. They who say Lord, Lord, enter the church; but not the kingdom of heaven. The faithful of all lands sit down with Abraham in that kingdom, while the children of the kingdom, who thought to come in by birth-right, without doubt, are cast out with anguish into

the regions of endless despair. The greatest saint on earth is less than the least of the glorified, who are Christ's at his coming: and though the church be far from the glory that is to be revealed, her true sons shall be changed in the day of the Lord Jesus, and of the resurrection of the dead, into the glorious likeness of our coming Lord, and together shine, like the sun, in one vast globe of light in the kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven is to be set up on the entire ruin and overthrow of the power of the devil. Therefore, while our Lord cast out devils, it was wiser to suppose that the kingdom of heaven had come before the time appointed, than that satan was casting down his own power, and trampling his own name in the dust. The parables all show a preparatory state of the kingdom in this life, like that preparation for the harvest, which consists in the all important work of preparing the ground, and sowing the seed: but the *opening* of the kingdom, is in the harvest of the world; when the tares and the chaff and all that offend, are separated from the wheat, and burnt up; when the Gospel net is dragged to the shore, and the good are put into vessels, and the bad are burned up with unquenchable fire. All the parables look directly to the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom, which is his coming in the end of the world, to raise the dead, and to summon all nations before him, that he may render to every man according to his works. This is the doctrine of the parable of *the tares and the wheat: the householder*, the Lord of the vineyard; and of the ten virgins; and of the ten talents. And the whole of the doctrine of the parables, and of the kingdom of heaven, in this view, is most emphatically summed up, and practically illustrated in the last of our Lord's public discourses, in which he describes his own coming in his kingdom, (that same kingdom which he had preached;) and, on his throne, judging all nations at his final bar; at which time he invites the blessed to enter upon their inheritance of that kingdom in the faith and hope of

which they had suffered all manner of tribulation in this world: and he separates the sinful and unbelieving to their own place for ever.

"Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand: come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world." How could he say: "come and inherit," if they were already in possession of the inheritance? The glory of the scene, and the power of the impression, depend on the fact, that the kingdom and the king before preached among men, have come, and that the saints, so far from having possessed it, deem themselves now unworthy to enter it, even at the invitation of their glorious king and Saviour, to whose testimonial in their favor, they humbly reply: Lord, when saw we thee in circumstances of wretchedness, and ministered unto thee? And it is not until he explains: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me;" that they are made sensible of the height of their exaltation, and the surety of their great inheritance, in the kingdom of the son of David which shall have no end.

Is not this a kingdom worthy of the Son of God solicitously to preach? worthy of the Lord to come down from heaven to proclaim, as glad tidings, *evangelion*, to the inhabitants of the earth, and worthy to induce men everywhere to forsake the hope of this world, and seek first the kingdom of heaven? The doctrine that the church is this kingdom, need not be named in this connection, except to show how far the church is yet removed from the purity, as well as unity, of the faith, once delivered to the saints. Blessed be ye poor, and meek, and pure in heart, and peacemakers, and merciful, and sorrowful, and persecuted for righteousness' sake; for yours is the kingdom of heaven, the inheritance of the new earth, the joy of the world to come, the fulness of the Lord our righteousness, the mercy of the Judge on the throne, the vision of our God in glory:

yea, rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven! This is the preaching of the Lord; the spirit of all his discourses; the very language of his sermon on the mount, which SERMON is all upon the great text, with which he began his ministry: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

This is no limited theme; or narrow view of the divine word and doctrine; but, like the eye under the forehead, it looks out straight forward upon all the creation of grace; and beholds the king of glory in his coming kingdom, which he has purchased with his own blood, and which he has sent the Holy Spirit to prepare and make ready against his return in the appointed time, to redeem the possession from the hand of the enemy, the strong man armed. It is no contracted view of the heavenly doctrine; but looking first to the king coming near in his kingdom, it necessarily regards all that the Lord has done, and is doing for his chosen, all that he has commanded for their guidance through the enemy's country, all that he has foretold for their encouragement, and admonition; all that he has ever said or done or promised to do. It does not so much change the theme of religious discourse, as it reduces all preaching to heavenly order, under Christ the king and his heavenly kingdom, for which he is preparing on earth his church, "which is his body, the fulness of him, that filleth all things." (Eph. 1: 22, 23.)

No man need fear the effect of this doctrine on revivals of religion, and efforts to publish the gospel among all nations. It was this doctrine which converted the three thousand and five thousand, and, in fine, the whole Roman Empire. So long as the church maintained it, Christianity gained upon the territories of paganism: and since the church has partially renewed this faith within three centuries, successful incursions have been made again into the regions of idolatry.

However it may strike the reader, I am fully convinced that the kingdom of heaven at hand and drawing near, was the theme of our Lord's prophecy, the single text of his ministry, the sole message he gave to the apostles and disciples to preach, and the form of sound words, in which he inclosed, as in a casket, the bright and precious jewel of the faith, when he delivered it once for all to the saints, to be by them carefully transmitted to the latest posterity, and published in all lands. We have the casket, but the jewel of heaven has been covered with a tinsel of earth. The holy truth, in a pure and unadulterated stream, runs through the New Testament and through the earlier fathers; but it does not come pure to us. By the way it comes, it has somehow been corrupted; until for a long time out of mind the meaning of the word has been quite changed, the coming of the kingdom has been generally given up, and that it has come, that it is the church, or the gospel dispensation, is now the current doctrine.

It will not be without interest, to learn when and how this change in the faith once certainly delivered to the saints, has been so effectually wrought, even supposing it to be of less importance than I regard it. As a matter of doctrinal truth, it has overwhelming interest, infinite relations and bearings, and unspeakable power and majesty and worth. But even as a matter of church history, and of curious inquiry, it will reward our labor, to search for the point of time and place where the pure stream of Shiloh from the fount at Jerusalem, first encountered the flood of turbid waters from out of the dragon's mouth, in the land of Egypt; and to observe how the two run side by side down the channel of time, for a long way distinctly marked and divided the one from the other, by the complexion of their waves; until at last they mingle their waters: and though the pure stream gives its consecrated name to the united current, the turbid one gives its earthy complexion, its violent character, its abrupt turns, and

its blind way, to their joint flood, on their long course to the ocean of eternity.—So the father of rivers, our own Mississippi, rolls on his meandering way, in a smooth, pure, and gently winding stream of dark blue waters from the remote North, until the deep Missouri bursts upon him from the West, with an earthy torrent, that is distinguishable many miles from their junction, by its grey hue along side of the dark blue waves of the Mississippi; whose venerable name indeed, prevails to the Gulf of Mexico; but the character of his winding and gentle flow, and the entire complexion of his beautiful and pure waters, are changed throughout and for ever.

Infinitely greater appears the change in the character of the divine word, which is made by saying that kingdom is come, which our Lord preached at hand. All the prophets who came before him prophesied of his kingdom. He began the record of his own mission to earth with the same testimony, closing up the vision of prophecy by opening the dispensation of the good news of the same kingdom; and, having left this gospel to be published to all nations, he ascended up on high, and shed down from the throne of heaven the promised Comforter, to be the guide and teacher of his people, and the earnest, the pledge in hand, of his own return in the appointed time, to make all things new, for his everlasting inheritance. But in the progress of ages, another idea set upon the church with a strong current, changing the nature of the prophecy and gospel of the kingdom; and teaching men that the kingdom has come; that the dispensation of the good news of its coming is the very kingdom itself in this world of sin and unbelief! As well may one say the shadow is the same thing as the substance which makes it; or that the tidings of a returning friend are that friend himself; or that the parchment deed is the actual estate of inheritance, conveyed in the deed. The Mosaic dispensation was the forerunner of the gospel, as the gospel is the fore-

runner of the kingdom of heaven. The Mosaic dispensation could not be always concurrent with the gospel, nor can the gospel be always concurrent with the dispensation of the fulness of times. The glad tidings of the kingdom must cease, when the dispensation of the kingdom begins.

The kingdom of Jesus and of heaven at hand, and drawing near, is the leading fact in the glad tidings of salvation, with which all others must harmonise, or the discord ensues which we hear; and the confusion must reign in all the household of faith, which our eyes behold. The doctrine that the kingdom of heaven has come, and is in this world, mars the beauty and proportions of the gospel. Indeed, it destroys the gospel. It is not *news*, to preach every sabbath day from age to age, that the kingdom of heaven was set up in this world eighteen hundred years ago. If *true*, that cannot be *news*, much less can it be *gospel*, or good news: but that the kingdom of heaven is at hand and drawing nearer every day, is good news indeed, whether men believe it or not. Satan's kingdom is soon to be destroyed, death itself is shortly to be destroyed, and the curse is to be forever removed; this is gospel of joy to every living soul who will believe it. That the Lord Jesus will soon manifest himself in his glorious kingdom, and restore all nature to its pristine loveliness, so that the very brutes shall obtain that they now groan while waiting for, to wit, the adoption of the sons of God, and the redemption of the body,—this is glad tidings of great joy to all people; this is the salvation which all flesh shall behold with gladness; and this is the gospel of Messiah's kingdom, which the Holy Spirit seals with impressive power.

"AT HAND."

One may say: "It is a long time, eighteen hundred years, for any thing to be at hand, and still drawing near. It is not possible, with all reverence for the word of God; or if it be possible, I should like to see it explained, that I also may give God the glory. As the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways; and his thoughts above our thoughts; but when he condescends to speak with men, he uses their language in its common acceptation. And I see no way to explain the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven drawing near for eighteen hundred years, except it may be by understanding a thousand years as one day with the Lord."

Nothing forbids our so understanding it. In this very connection it is that Peter takes occasion to explain the nature of time in the language of heaven. He is speaking of the coming of the Lord, in the end of the world; and of the seeming slackness of the fulfilment of the promise, insomuch that many shall scoff and ask: where is the promise of his coming? when he assures us that "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come, as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up:" it is in this connection the apostle says: "beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing; that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Pet. 3: 8.) Therefore, we have divine authority for applying this heavenly standard of time to the very case in hand, the coming of the Lord in the kingdom of heaven.

Men lean to their own understanding, and measure the power of God by an earthly standard: as the lad from the White mountains, who could not believe that the ocean is salt. Coming to the city, he directly stole away from his employer, and down to the wharf he went, to taste for himself. Until then he would not believe, because he could not conceive where the salt should come from, to make so much brine. The lad did not consider the mighty power of God; but doubted, like the Sadducees concerning the resurrection, because he could not understand how it could possibly be done. And when we say of time, "eighteen hundred years is a long time for the kingdom of glory to be coming;" we do not consider with whom we have to do: and that with the Eternal a few thousand years is a very little while; even as yesterday, or a watch in the night, when it is passed, compared with his everlasting kingdom which is coming.

But in the ordinary use of language, short and long are wholly comparative terms. Their extent depends entirely on their connection in earthly things, as is also true of high and low. A vegetable may be an inch *high*, and a tree a hundred feet *high*, and a mountain twenty-five thousand feet *high*, and the heavens infinitely *high*. The same word *high* is properly used in each connection; but the measure varies from one inch to infinity without the least impropriety. It is precisely so with *short*, or any adverb of time. In connection with the event of an hour, it will extend to minutes; with the events of a year, it will extend to months; with the events of a kingdom, it will extend to centuries; and with heavenly events, it will extend to thousands of years.—If we say America was discovered by Columbus A. D. 1492, and was shortly after settled by the various nations of Europe, we speak of two centuries and more, and yet the word "*shortly*" misleads no one to think it was effected in a day. The connection of the word with the history of a continent

expands its meaning readily to embrace centuries. Even so in connection with eternal things, and with the kingdom of heaven, its meaning embraces tens of centuries, and boundless years, because the subject with which it is connected is infinite, even the kingdom of heaven.

The time of preparation for any thing in this world, is properly said among men, to be a short time, in which they must be diligent, or they will not get ready, for the time is indeed short, and the forthcoming event is at hand. The Lord deals plainly with men. The gospel day is the season of preparation for the kingdom of heaven, and he warns us that it is short, in order that we may be diligent in making ready.

Moreover, the kingdom which our Savior preached, was understood by his hearers to be that which supplants the four monarchies foretold by the prophet Daniel: and it is so understood by the commentators now, who teach us that three of those monarchies had passed away, when under the reign of the fourth, the gospel or good news of the next following began to be preached. As wise men, it would have accorded with our judgment to say to Babylon during its rule: "Bethink yourself; the Persian is coming. He will pierce your proud walls; he will enter your brazen gates; he will dwell in your palaces." The Persian came in his time, as the prophet had foretold; and now was his turn to be admonished thus: "Persian, bethink yourself; for the Grecian is coming. Your myriads will fall before him; your empire will yield to his formidable prince, and to his irresistible phalanx; for he must rule overall." The Grecian came and conquered the known world; and in his turn, might well be admonished to bethink himself; for the Roman is coming; to bethink himself and rule with moderation, for his time is short, when his dominion shall be taken away.

And when the Roman was in the height of his power and glory, it was according both with the mercy of the Lord,

and with the common sense of men, to admonish the rulers and people, that the day of the Lord draws nigh. "Bethink yourselves, O Romans; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths strait; for his heavenly host is coming; and who shall abide in that day?"

This is the very thing the Lord has said, and has given in charge to be preached in his name, during the remainder of the fourth empire. Bethink yourselves; for the kingdom of God draws nigh; the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—"Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. 23: 19.) The time is long, compared with the narrow span of human life; but it is short indeed, compared with the boundless eternity.

LITERAL PROPHECY.

An heir is an expectant. It is essential to the state of an heir, that he looks forward to the possession of an estate, which he has never yet received. The moment he receives the inheritance, he ceases to be an heir; he is then lord of all the estate. The heir is an expectant of an estate, which he has not received, so long as he remains an heir. And when the apostle names the Son of God, as the appointed heir of all things, (Heb. 1: 1, 2,) he signifies that the inheritance is an expectancy, and is not in possession. This at first seems to conflict with such phrases of scripture as this: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Mat. 28: 18.) "As thou hast given him power over all flesh." (John 17: 2.) "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet." (Eph. 1: 20, 21.)

But I apprehend that it is common in the scriptures, as it certainly is among men, to speak of that as done already, which is sure to be done in its season. We say one has an

estate, when he has an indefeasible title to it of any sort; although he has not come into possession. Whether he has bought it with his money, or obtained it by his worth, or received it from his ancestors by inheritance, we are accustomed to say that he is owner of the estate; it is his, although the set time for entering into the possession may be years to come. But among men, it would never do, to call one an heir of a property into the possession of which he has already entered: it would be among men, untrue to call him an "appointed heir" of an estate of which he is already in full and perfect possession. The name of "appointed heir of all things," is suitable to our heavenly king, before he comes into his kingdom; and his being so designated by the Holy Spirit, is a plain intimation that he has not yet received the possession of his inheritance: for, it is inexplicable to my mind, how it could with propriety be said, "He is the appointed heir of all things," after he had once received the *kingdom* and dominion of all things into his own hands for an everlasting possession. To my limited understanding, it is impossible; but God is infinite; his ways are incomprehensible; with him all things are possible; only he cannot deny his own word; he cannot prevaricate; he cannot mis-state a fact, or an event: as he says, so it must inevitably be to the jot and tittle, that is, to the very letter.

Many feel at liberty to use a degree of latitude in the understanding of the word of God, which, as honorable men, they would be ashamed to have another use in the understanding of their own word. Every upright man is very careful of his word. Every honest man is faithful to his word. Every honorable man will do exactly as he promises, if not deprived of the power. One of the princes of this world, who should be liberal of his promises, and not careful to fulfil them; who should be fond of exciting hopes in his humble dependants by fair words of promise, which he did not punctiliously keep to the letter; such an one would be held in distrust and contempt by honorable men.

No honest man will fail to cherish the reputation of his truth, the strictness of his veracity, the fidelity of his promises to the day, and the punctiliousness of his engagements to the letter: and any man in the ordinary business of life, who is careless in these particulars, is not fit to do business: and if he succeed in business, it is without the honor of the wise, and without the respect of the trustworthy. He cannot go into the market without an ink-horn and a witness, to seal his engagements; for he is known to be a speckled bird, though he may be a very rich man. This is a reputation that neither you nor I would covet: we would repudiate it from ourselves, and despise it in another. No matter whether we were in office or out, high or low, a prince or a beggar, who should lightly regard the letter of his own promise, we would agree lightly to regard both him and his word.

And shall sinful man be more just than God? Shall a worm be more honorable than the Creator? Shall man impute to the Lord Jehovah a character for looseness of speech, which man would from himself repudiate? Shall man ascribe to the Most High a disregard of the letter of his word, which would be among men dishonorable, and would be among correct business men esteemed disreputable? God is the source and fountain of honor, the righteous God of immaculate truth, who hates iniquity, and will punish liars. It is impossible for God to fall from his word; or to hold out encouragement in promises, that he will not amply fulfil in deeds. He knows how to speak plainly and accurately; and to speak in parables, and by metaphors and symbols; and when by his Son he proclaims the promise of his kingdom at hand, and drawing near, it is a plain and welcome word of God, which he is able to keep and will keep to the letter.

Therefore, I have no possible way of understanding this promise of the Lord, except it be *literally*, without treating his word, as would be injurious to the word of an honest

man. When he declares "The kingdom of heaven is drawing near;" I have no way but to receive the word in its plainest sense; considering, that it is God who speaks, and not a finite and erring mortal: and, that, coming from him, the word may have an extent of meaning, infinite as its Author; but yet accurate as truth to the letter; and that it is not after the manner of God, to come short in his deeds, but to do more than he promises: as when Moses took the twelve rods of the princes of Israel, according to the house of their fathers, and laid them up, with the promise of God that "the man's rod whom I shall choose shall blossom. And on the morrow, Moses went into the tabernacle; and behold the rod of Aaron was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds." (Numbers, 17th chap.) This is the manner in which Jehovah keeps his promises.

A disputant may think it easy to puzzle me still, with some text which comes in mind; and I readily admit he could do it. I say not, that I can comprehend all the word of the Most High, and can literally explain it: but I do maintain that its Author can, and I believe he will do it. The Lord God, who spoke the word, will maintain it to the letter, and will defend it from all shadow of impeachment. To make any question of his strict veracity, and most particular accuracy, and literal fidelity, will not prepare a man to see his face in peace. Far be it from me to forsake the letter of his word in search of its spirit; to empty his word of all truth by turning it upside down in pursuit of a figurative sense. Far be it from me to question its perfect accuracy, because I do not see how it consists with the letter. I know God is able to vindicate every word he has spoken; and I am sure he will do it, though man can neither do it, nor yet believe it.

What has he done? Did Adam die; did the old world perish in the flood? He plainly warned them; but they did not believe it, until their fate was sealed.—Has he given

Sarah a son, when she was past age; has he led Israel out of Egypt; has he given Judah a captive to Babylon? Neither of them believed, when he told them. They supposed it could not be the literal truth: but the Lord vindicated his word to the letter, and he will ever do it. And when one unbeliever exclaimed: "Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be!" he was answered: "Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not partake thereof. And so it fell out unto him; for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died." (2 Kings 7: 19.)

Where is the allegorist, (if he had lived before the event answered to the promise,) that would have failed to declare of this word: "A virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son:" "It is surely metaphorical, it is a figure manifestly, for the event is naturally impossible." Let all such consider that it is *naturally impossible* with man, but with God it is only impossible that his word shall fail in one single point, though heaven and earth pass away. In the day of the Lord's going up to Jerusalem, when he foretold the disciples of his death and resurrection, they understood him not: though he spoke plainly, they could not believe it literally. In a multitude of cases on record, infinite mischief has been the consequence of man's unbelief of the plain word of God in its simplest sense; but never one occurs to me of very great importance, in which harm was done by adhering to the letter of the promise.

Now, that men rejected the Lord, mocked him, scourged, condemned, and slew him, was all literally foretold: that they should give him gall and vinegar to drink, and wag their heads at him, and pierce his hands and his feet, and divide his raiment among them, and cast lots for his vest, and make his grave with the rich, and many other things, were all foretold, and were performed expressly that the scriptures might be fulfilled, literally fulfilled. Is it possible, therefore, that

the great God can be very particular about his veracity in small matters, and careless of it in momentous affairs? Far from that.—Shall the lots be cast on the vesture that the scriptures might be fulfilled; and Jesus be numbered with the transgressors that the scriptures might be fulfilled; aye, must they give just thirty pieces of silver for him, because at that goodly price the scriptures had foretold they would value him; and must they still cast that same silver to the potter, for the purchase of his field, the very thirty pieces, "the price of him whom the children of Israel did value," without discount of a piece, and without any advance, that the scriptures might be fulfilled: and shall not the Son of man soon come into his glorious inheritance of all things, that the scriptures may be fulfilled? Was Jehovah careful of his word in the matter of the number of silver pieces, and that it was silver rather than an equivalent in gold or other coin; and shall he not be also careful of his word spoken to the fathers by the prophets, and in these last days, unto us by his Son: that the day of the Lord is at hand: "for the day of the Lord cometh; for it is nigh at hand." (Joel 2: 1.)

Think you it reasonable, that the Almighty should accurately frame his speech to the exact letter in very small things of earth, spoken unto the fathers by the prophets; and that he should use great looseness of speech in regard to heavenly things, spoken unto us in these last days by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things?—Rely upon it, the same care which in the time past he has taken of his word, he will take in time to come. He foretold the ruin of Babylon, that the very place of the city should be lost in the earth: he foretold the ruin of Tyre, where the fishermen now dry their nets, as he said. He is careful to this day, as he said, to sift the Jews among all nations, without permitting them to be lost. He is faithful to his word, to keep his promise in regard to seed time and harvest, that they never fail: and he will be faithful to bruise Satan,

under our feet, shortly, and to come in his kingdom quickly, and to rule over all nations, living and dead, for his everlasting inheritance. "I will praise thee with my whole heart; before the Gods will I sing praise unto thee; I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving kindness, and FOR THY TRUTH; for thou hast magnified THY WORD, above all, thy name." (Ps. 138: 1, 2.)

This is his word, first preached, uttered with earnestness, and repeated with care, and persisted in to the end of the Gospel: "The kingdom of heaven is come nigh unto you; the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Therefore, is it come? Then the word "*at hand*" is not true. But is it come since this word was first spoken? Then it came before the word was written; and its epoch should be noted in the record, that men might know its era. But it has not come; for thus saith the Lord: It is at hand; it is drawing near: and, therefore, he taught us to pray: "Thy kingdom come;" which would be a delusive word in our mouths, if the kingdom had already come. It has not come; because Satan's kingdom is not destroyed nor ended, nor is the curse yet removed from off the earth; and the gospel is our glad tidings, that these things will shortly be done.

"Amen! the covenant is secure,
"In all things ordered well and sure;
"The promises confirmed remain,
"In Christ they're yea, in him Amen!"

Dutch Reformed.

There is a baneful tendency of the learned, to forsake the plain letter of divine Revelation, in eager pursuit of its spirit. This is in some degree wrought by the natural love of system in the enlightened mind, which meets with exceeding great obstacles to perfection in any scheme of divinity, keeping in steady view the literal sense of the scripture page. It is next to impossible to cut and square and shape the

letter, so as perfectly to accord with any system of school theology: and, therefore, in order to make the word manageable, men are compelled to fly occasionally quite away from the form of words, for the sake of the etherial spirit. Then, having quit the letter, they easily complete their system, whether it is confusion or not; for any supposed deficiency in the etherial form is naturally supplied out of a fruitful fancy.

Then men can have a temporal millennium in this present evil world, before the great day of the Lord, in which state of carnal felicity, will be united much of the heavenly glory. Endless difficulties exist in the theory, but none in the happy state; for Satan is to be confined, Antichrist to be cut off, the heathen converted, the Jews restored, and the world made ten fold more captivating than ever, while yet the gospel is to be preached; and all men are to be under the influence of its laws. A large class of texts will be of no more use in that day, than the Mosaic ritual is to us. They will serve, however, to show posterity some of their father's trials: such as, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil: for we wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6: 11.) Seek first the kingdom of heaven; press into it; strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. For straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it; while broad is the way and wide is the gate that leads to death, and many there be that go in thereat. "Through much tribulation we enter into the kingdom," ever since Paul's day: but in the day that is expected, tribulation is to cease. A host of difficulties arise out of the scriptures against this wily scheme; but when once men are

quit of the hard letter, and fast hold of the airy theory, they easily mount over all obstacles, on the Pegasus of fancy, seated firmly and gracefully in the saddle of a figurative interpretation. It is sweet thus to soar away from earth, and to abide with angelic spirits, and to taste their spiritual meat, and to quaff at the perennial fountains of the airy realm. One comes back from such a heavenly flight, to the rugged and indomitable letter of the word, with the feeling of sore disappointment that comes over the mind of him, who wakes out of a placid dream of social delight around the family hearth, and finds himself a prisoner still in a heathen land. Oh, what a pang is in his heart; what a burden are his chains! He would dream again; and in the fatuity of his mind he would dream always. But dreaming is fatal to his hopes. He will never see the land of his birth, while he indulges this spirit; no, never gladden his heart with the embrace of his father, and with the kiss of his brother; never see the face of his own native land, and hear the welcome shout of his friends at the return of the captive, at the coming of the ransomed, from the prison of the strong man, armed in the pagan country. To eat opium and dream, to drink wine and forget himself, will not regain him his inestimable liberty. He must toil for it. Though an angel unloose his fetters, and open the prison doors, and set him free, he has many a rugged mile to walk, many a difficult mountain to climb, many a fearful river to cross, many a foe to meet, and either to avoid or to subdue, before he can sing the jubilee of freedom, in the bosom of his family, with his anxious father, and his brethren that would have died to rescue him. The good Lord keep him from the intoxicating cup of dreamy pleasure, keep him amidst all the dangers of the way through the enemy's country, and bring him with joy and gladness to the embrace of his father and of his kindred in the land of his birth.

So with him who leaves the letter of prophecy and delights in the spirit, in the figurative sense, in the metaphorical

meaning, in the philosophical interpretation: he will hardly reach the heavenly city. He may delight himself and others, but he will not much profit either. He may discover wonders, he may see heavenly beauties, he may discourse of unutterable glories, but all must of necessity be, like his rule of interpretation, figurative and unprofitable, without any substantial benefit to the life, or lasting consolation to the soul.

To my own mind, the spiritual meaning of the literal word is in the word so combined, as to be essential to the soul's nourishment, and safe, and grateful, and salutary; but, if any one undertake to extract it, by putting the literal prophecy into the alembic; and, after due heat and proper treatment of alchymy applied, casts out the letter as refuse, and drinks the distillation for his daily delight; he is no less certain to come to a miserable and painful end, than the wretched man, who thinks to live, not by the bread of the wheat, but by the decoction of the worm of the still. Let every one beware of intoxicating spirits, lest he come before God with strange fire, and be consumed of Him; as it befell Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, in the tabernacle of the Lord. For myself, I make the letter of the word my daily bread, without the shadow of a doubt that it is all good, and well prepared for the soul, as the Lord has given it. I neither turn, nor scruple its value, or weight or measure; and I find it, in this way, meat indeed, and I also find in it a spirit which is drink indeed, without any intoxication, or unwholesome excitement.

I have now set forth the word which in these last days God hath spoken to us by his Son; how in all the gospel he urges men every where to repent, for the kingdom of Messiah is at hand: and I have explained the strict propriety of the use of this word "at hand," though it cover a period of centuries to come, for it is connected with eternal things, and by that connection receives in common use an illimitable

extent of meaning. And I have humbly maintained the honor of God's word, as I would the word of honor of a righteous man, my friend, whose faithfulness I might defend, though with very inadequate powers: and I insist that his holy word of promise should be taken, as the word of an honorable man, in the simplicity of the letter, and in the plainest sense. In this honest view, the rainbow in the East is not more distinctly portrayed on the dark clouds of a past shower, than the Son of Man coming in his kingdom is, on the sunny page of Scripture, portrayed at hand: and his near coming with clouds is drawn in colors so vivid, strong, and glorious; so mingled in splendor, and in beauty various, that, as the reflected bow of heavenly promise in the skies, Scripture does, in a reflected sense, speak of the kingdom as among us, in the heart of flesh; and poor, dim-sighted mortals, have been led to mistake the beautiful, but reflected bow, which has no foundations, for that splendid arch of promise, which spans in beauty the whole heavens, and rests its broad pillars of glorious light on the solid earth.

Such is the token of the covenant, which Jehovah in the Scriptures has made with man, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent under his feet shortly, and shall come quickly to make all things new in the resurrection of the dead, and the promised kingdom of heaven.

THIS WORLD AND THE WORLD TO COME, OR KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
"Zion, city of our God!
"He, whose word cannot be broken,
"Formed thee for his own abode."

In a manuscript on hand, I have next considered the promises as one heavenly arch of uniform and continuous glory and beauty, from Genesis to Revelation; a token of the covenant of God with man, to make restitution of all things, in new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, at the coming of the Son of Man, in the end of "this present evil world:" when all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and come forth; "they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5: 29.)

These are the things spoken at sundry times, and in divers manners, unto us by the prophets, as shortly to come to pass; they are also preached unto us by the Son of God in the gospel of his kingdom at hand; so that the prophecies and the gospel harmonise in testimony of the coming and kingdom of the Messiah, which has drawn very near, and will be manifested in the eternal life of the world to come. But I am constrained to leave this gracious bow of promise, the bright token of Jehovah's everlasting covenant, for another opportunity: for I am a feeble one, and how can I hold up to your view a glory so perspicuous and magnificent, until through your prayers the Lord strengthen me with his Spirit? "Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength: give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name—the Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth king for ever. The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." (Ps. 29.)

In bringing to your notice this apostolic doctrine, I am called to use terms and texts of Scripture, familiar perhaps to you, in senses that I do not understand them: therefore, I need your patience, until we can arrive at a common meaning of doubtful passages. But that you may have a guide to my meaning always before you, observe that I regard the kingdom of heaven, which Christ preached, not as the church, or gospel dispensation; but as the eternal state of the righteous after the end of this word, in the resurrection and judgment day, and in the new heavens and earth, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, which time cannot limit, and which sin, nor pain, nor death can enter; of which eternal state all the prophets foretell, and the gospel publishes the glad tidings, that it is at hand. In this world, all the promises do travail with faith, and they come to the birth together, in the world to come, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, according to these lines of the poet:

"O'er these gloomy hills of darkness,
"Look, my soul! be still, and gaze:
"All the promises do travail
"With a glorious day of grace:
"Blessed jubilee!
"Let thy glorious morning dawn!"

We know that this world is in darkness, and that the morning of the resurrection is the blessed jubilee of the world to come.

"The world to come:" what means this word of promise?

Every where in the Scriptures, the future kingdom of heaven is set before the believer in contrast with the present dominion of the prince of this world; and this world is set in contrast with the world to come. To see this in the light of Revelation, I copy the connection of the words, as they occur a few times in the Evangelists.

"Neither in this world, nor in the world to come :" (Mat. 12: 32.) in relation to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

"But he shall receive a hundred fold, now *in this time*, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions: and *in the world to come*, eternal life." (Mark 10: 30.) "Receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting." (Luke 18: 30.)

"For the children of *this world* are wiser in their generation, than the children of light." (Luke 16: 8.)

"The children of *this world* marry and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that world*, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." (Luke 20: 34, 35, 36.)

The context does not discover what is meant by "that world," only as the above quotation shows it; and the preaching of it in the name of the kingdom of heaven, was the Lord's universal custom. It belongs with the resurrection of the dead; and its inhabitants are identified, as "the children of God," by their "being the children of the resurrection." So that there is a world to come, into which they who are accounted worthy will obtain entrance in the resurrection of the dead, and live on an equality with the angels; and "that world" is the kingdom of heaven.

To obtain "that world," and the resurrection unto eternal life, is the exhortation of the preacher, and is the effort of the believer, and the commandment of the Lord, in the gospel. But, now, the associated efforts of the church, together with the general aim of private Christians, even the hopes of the church, are, to gain this world, *for the Lord*. The generous spirits of the world, "speak of the world, and the world heareth them." (1 John 4: 5.) They contemplate the

improvements row making in the world with a high degree of satisfaction, that neither leaves any doubt of a long season of "*peace and safety*" in this world, before the end comes; nor distrusts the hope of a season of *extraordinary felicity* on earth, in which the messengers of the king shall no more be despised, while they invite the people to the marriage of his son, nor be ill treated, while they ask in the Lord's name, to render him of the fruits of his vineyard. "Now, behold, all things are ready: come unto the marriage."

However, the people make light of the invitation yet; and go their way, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise; and the rest sometimes spitefully use the messengers to this day. Surely, this is gospel, and during this dispensation, it will continue to be gospel to the end. The tares will grow with the wheat; the bad fish will be taken with the good, in the same net; the good seed will fall, some in the highway, and some in stony places, and some among thorns; and the husbandmen will, as they now do, refuse to render the Lord of the vineyard his fruits in their season; until the end comes. And when that comes, observe, all ye that love the Lord, then comes the separation of the tares from the wheat, the bad fish from among the good, the sheep from the goats; which is the resurrection and judgment, both of the just and of the unjust. Therefore, as wise men, let us place no hope of any lasting joy, or permanent felicity, or even peace, in this world: and expect the coming of the Lord, and the return of the Jews with father Abraham from the dead, to the New Jerusalem, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. For:

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? And what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." (Mat. 16: 26, 27.)

"Wo unto the world, because of offences!" (Mat. 18: 8.)

The scriptures pronounce no blessing on this world, but only on the world to come.

"For all these things do the nations of *this world* seek after;—but rather seek ye the kingdom of God:" (Luke 12: 30, 31.) that is, the world to come.

"For God so loved the world—

"For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3: 16, 17.)

But men love darkness still, rather than light; they reject the coming again of the Lord, as they once rejected and slew him; and this is their condemnation, their offence, for which a wo is pronounced against this world. Yet he giveth life unto the world; he gave his flesh for the life of the world: but the world hateth him, because he testifies that its works are evil. He testifies of its people; "Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world." (John 8: 23.)

"He that hateth his life *in this world*, shall keep it unto *life eternal*." (John 12: 25.)

"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John 12: 31.) This judgment will be *executed* in the end of this world.

"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." (John 12: 47.) Not so will be his coming again in the end of the world.

"The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." (John 13: 17.) And yet many are expecting a millennium, in which this world will receive the Spirit of truth; in which the foolishness of preaching will become the wisdom of this world; yea, when the preaching of Christ crucified will be no longer a stumbling block to the Jews, or to the Gentiles foolishness.

"For the *prince of this world* cometh, and hath nothing in me." v. 39.

Like prince, like people: neither have any portion in Christ, nor in his kingdom.

"If the world hate you, you know it hated me, before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15: 18, 19.)

Where is the promise of the gospel, that *this world* will ever be changed, as in the supposed millennium, and made to love whom now it hates? There is a better world to come, which has the promises. But wo to this world, for it hated Jesus, and slew him; and it rejects the crucified to this day.

"He will reprove the world of sin,—because they believe not on me.—Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." (John 16: 8, 11.)

While this world stands, it must be reproved for the sin of unbelief. Until judgment is executed by the Son of Man, when he will lift up his voice, ("he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies,") Satan will continue to be the prince of this world. Till then will continue the gospel dispensation, and these words will be true:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, that *ye shall weep and lament;* but *the world shall rejoice*—and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." In the end of the gospel dispensation, the Lord's people shall see him again, and their sorrow shall be turned into joy: for the triumph of Satan will be over, "this present evil world," that "lieth in wickedness," will come to an end; and the saints will possess the kingdom of the eternal world to come, for an everlasting inheritance. But to the end of this world, its prince and its people will rejoice over those scenes, which make holy men weep and lament; while they pray to the Father of all: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as in heaven."

This "*little while*," in the last conversation of our Lord with his disciples, in John 13, 14, 15, and 16 chapters, used to trouble me, as it did his disciples, when they reasoned upon it, and said "A little while,—we cannot tell what he saith:" and though they obtained satisfaction at last, I could never find, in the word recorded, that which should make the word plain to any ordinary reader; until I considered, that the *absence*, of which he spake, and in view of which they grieved, and to cheer them in the prospect of which, he promised them the comforter, was *his ascension* to the Father; and not his death. In his crucifixion, they had no comforter: but in the absence of which he spake, he sent them the Holy Spirit. Then the "*little while and ye shall not see me*," was the period of seven weeks, to the ascension: "and again a little while, and ye shall see me," is the period from his ascension to his coming again, in the end of the world. So insignificant is time, in the view of eternity; so short is the period of this world, compared with the life of the world to come!

"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father." (John 16: 28.) This is the word that seems to have satisfied his disciples: and it may teach us, that, if we would follow Christ, we must leave the world: having this for the last word of discourse from him, that, "*In the world*, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome *the world*." (John 16: 33.)

"He left his starry crown,
"And laid his robes aside;
"On wings of love came down;
"And wept and bled and died.
"What he endured,
"O who can tell,
"To save our souls,
"From death and hell!"

Stewart.

And now multitudes are expecting his kingdom to be extended over this world, and his gospel to continue while the world is all HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. As well may the Ethiop be white, and the leopard change his spots; which in this world can never be. When the Lord comes, he will change not the color of this world only; but the entire conformation, and whole nature throughout. And when he prays, with all his disciples around, for the last time, it is without any view of the supposed millennium in this world, however remote. He takes a contrary view.

"The *world* hath *hated* them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world; but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil, (the wicked One.) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17: 14, 15, 16.) "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." (John 17: 25.)

When did it ever? or when will it ever? This world is recorded in distinction from that which is to come: "this present evil world." (Gal. 1: 4.) The beloved John declares that "the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5: 19.) The Lord Jesus exclaims: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee!" And all the current of scripture testimony is decidedly toward the condemnation of this world, and of its prince, who is the prince of darkness, and this world is in his darkness: therefore, the wise need not lay up their treasures here; the holy need not expect perfection here; the zealous need not expect the conversion of the world. "The true light shines in the darkness; but the darkness comprehendeth it not." Whenever the world should become what some expect, the entire spirit of this last conversation and prayer of our Lord, with his disciples, must be changed; all the tenor of the gospel must undergo a new formation; and the word of God and of his Christ, in respect to this world, would seem to pass away; which, heaven and earth shall sooner do.

There are prophecies of the earth, (which like the promises to Abraham, regard the new earth,) that must be fulfilled in glory: and it is by mistaking these for promises of this world, as by mistaking the preaching of the kingdom of our Lord, for the kingdom itself, even the church for the kingdom, that men have been led, and are still led, I humbly believe, into an error, palpable as that of the worship of images, and invocation of the blessed virgin, which were universal a few centuries ago.

How easily these views may be strengthened by an appeal to the Epistles, the inquiring mind will readily perceive. Proof cannot be multiplied to weariness on so great a subject; but the reader will rejoice more in it, to find some portion of this proof for himself, as he peruses the writings of Paul and Peter and James and John; taking this one word only to lead in the search:—"Forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the *world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*" (Gal. 6: 14.) Crucifixion is foreign to the expected state of felicity in the world; but it accords with the hope of a believer in the life of the world to come; and with the Lord's final testimony: "*In this world*, ye shall have tribulation."

"But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" and to as many as follow me, I will give the kingdom of the world to come.

ETERNAL LIFE, OR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

"Arrayed in glorious grace
"Shall their vile bodies shine,
"And every shape, and every face
"Look heavenly, and divine."

For the sake of varying the ground of observation, and of presenting the same truth in a new aspect, I will take brief notice of the doctrine of the Apostles, as expressed by the word LIFE, in the Acts and Epistles.

Jesus is "*the Prince of life*;" (Acts 3: 15.) whose doctrine is called "the words of this life;" (Acts 5: 20.) first preached to the Jews only, who at length rejoiced that God hath "also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11: 18.) "For it was necessary, (says our apostle to his brethren in the flesh,) that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of *everlasting life*, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13: 46.) "And as many as were ordained to *eternal life*, believed." (v. 48.)

This is the life of which Jesus is Prince, and to which his kingdom has respect, and of which his chosen are heirs, even the same to which he invites them in these heavenly words: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world:" for in the conclusion of that solemn description of the judgment day, it is written: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but *the righteous into life eternal.*" (Mat. 25: 46.)

Eternal life is that of which the Lord is Prince; and his kingdom of that life was the theme of his discourse, the text of his preaching: "who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, *eternal life*:" but tribulation and anguish to the contentious and others. (Rom. 2: 6, 7, 8.)

It is perfectly apparent, that the Holy Scriptures make *eternal life* and *the kingdom* of *heaven*, synonymous terms, in both Testaments. It is needless to pursue the investigation, for all the Bible speaks in this strain. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end *everlasting life*. For the

wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is *eternal life*, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6: 22, 23.) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the *crown of life*, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (Jam. 1: 12.) This is that crown of which Paul speaks, in connexion with the coming of the Lord in his kingdom, at the resurrection of the dead: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4: 8.) Peter calls it a crown of glory: "And when the chief shepherd shall appear, (that is, come again,) ye shall receive a crown of glory, that fadeth not away." (1 Pet. 5: 4.) This is the very thing the young man sought for: "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit *eternal life?*" Keep the commandments if you will enter *into life*, was the reply. I have, he said, "what lack I yet?" But the answer made him go away sad, "for he had great possessions." Then said Jesus: "A rich man shall hardly enter into the *kingdom of heaven.*" (Mat. 19: 13.) And when his disciples expressed their amazement, he repeated the word; but comforted them; saying: "ye that have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel: and every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit *everlasting life.*" (Mat. 19: 28, 29.) This *eternal life* was the thing the rich young man desired to know how he might inherit; and the Lord both tells *how*, and also *where*, even in the kingdom of heaven; and also *when* "the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory."

Many words cannot make this matter plainer: the kingdom of heaven, preached by our Lord, is not the church, nor is it

the gospel dispensation; but it is the throne of Immanuel's glory, in the resurrection of the dead, to eternal life, in the world to come.

UNBELIEF, THE SIN OF THE WORLD TO THE LAST.

"That awful day will surely come,
"The appointed hour makes haste;
"When I must stand before my judge,
"And pass the solemn test."

The hope of the kingdom of heaven in this world is so material to this world, and the belief that it is in the world is to the Laodicean church so very dear, that were they convinced of the error, it would not be easy to change their mind, their habit of thinking and speaking, of praying and hoping. Happily it requires no change of their laboring, so far as they labor for the glory of God, unto eternal life. The world *will* not be convinced: that is, the world will never consent to surrender to the law and administration of the Prince of Life and of Peace, until the end of the world suddenly overtakes its inhabitants. The world will never believe, that JESUS, the crucified, is coming in any time short of a thousand years to destroy the blasphemers; never. So far from it, the longer he in mercy delays, the less will the world expect him, and the more will it harden itself, to the end of time. This is the plain doctrine of the whole word of God, and the particular doctrine of the book of Revelation, with the exception of only the twentieth chapter, which I am sure is very rashly interpreted by the many commentators in this age, who make it the *nucleus* of the whole scheme of prophecy, and the centre of the system.

Certain that the world will never surrender the hope of the kingdom of heaven,—the supposed possession of the

inheritance of which it obtained, when it slew Jesus, the rightful heir; I am little encouraged to expect an easy victory over the unbelief of the church. Though convinced with the Bible in hand, the conviction must be quite against the will of the multitude.

> "A man convinced against his will
> "Is of the same opinion still."

This is a sentiment—though partaking but little of the style of inspiration, that has the force of known truth. The nominal church is much like the young man in the gospel, seeking after the kingdom of heaven, and carefully fulfilling all known duty, carefully obeying the commandments of God; but withal it "*has great possessions*," and far greater expectations, in this world; and it cannot part with these, except with a pang, such as seized on the heart of the young man, whom the Lord instructed unto his heavenly kingdom. He went away sorrowful. It must be so with those who have permanent funds, and cherished institutions, and large expectations in this world. Their heart is in these things, *for the Lord's sake;* and they cannot see how it should be necessary to part with all for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. I do not condemn them; but I praise God for his word; that "with God all things are possible," and so the *rich* may be saved, while the *poor* have the gospel preached to them; for their heart is empty enough to receive it: "the deceitfulness of riches" does not in them choke the word, and render it unfruitful. Many, however, of all classes, will be glad, when they hear the cry: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" And they will arise, and trim their lamps, and go forth to meet him.

THE KINGDOM OF THE CHURCH IS ROME'S DELUSION.

Here I rest the argument, for the present, in support of the kingdom of heaven for the future life, to take up some of the grounds on which the common belief rests in the scripture for support. The Pope does not pretend to rule this kingdom of the church for Peter, without some scripture authority: and so the kingdom itself does not pretend to be in this world, without some show of scripture to sustain it. The Pope improves upon the common belief, the universal belief, that the kingdom of heaven is the church in this world, by devoutly believing that *he is its king*. This, Protestants agree to brand for the highest presumption, without suspecting, that by allowing and believing the kingdom of heaven to be in this world, they furnish an empty throne in this world for some man of sin to occupy; and they supply the Pope with the very keys of the kingdom, to prostrate all under their stroke; inasmuch as they acknowledge the power of Peter's keys in this world, and yet have no Pope of their own, to dispute with him of Rome for their possession. In this way the keys are carelessly left in his hands, to wield at will; and like Hercules he has used them, to send multitudes to death.

Were the kingdom of heaven in this world, what forbids that a mortal should be vicegerent of it? And if no other claims the high trust, who shall dispute for it with the Pope? If Peter truly received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, some successor of Peter should have them: and it may well be the Pope, seeing that no other important personage has ever made successful claim to them.

These are thoughts too wide of my object to be pursued here. They are investigated elsewhere, and they will bear study, and I think reward it too. It is written: "He shall make war with the saints, and prevail against them." This

is a wonder; but their error has often been, by contending with him, on his own false ground, that the kingdom of heaven is here: which the moment they acknowledge, his mouth, that speaks great words, exclaims in a voice of majesty and thunder: "Who is king on earth, but I?" and before they have time to recover, he receives their amazing obeisance, or they receive the weight of his keys: and the very ground they stand upon trembles under their feet. In any event they are beaten, they are discomfited, they are shamefully handled; and they have no defence ready, except it be hard names and the remembrance of his scandalous faults. But these thrown up in his face only harden him, and bring a reproach on all.

"How then?"

"I am a republican, Mr. Bishop: I acknowledge no kingdom in the church, but a congregation only. The kingdom of heaven, of whose keys Peter has the promise, is not the church, is not the gospel dispensation, is not any sort of a dominion in this world: but it is a future state in the world to come; and how can you, or any mortal, be vicegerent *over the future state?* It is impossible. And for the matter of the keys, no record is made of Peter's having received them, any more than of Paul's having received his crown. It is not possible that he ever received them; for they belong with Paul's crown of righteousness, to the future state; and neither the crown nor the keys of that world are possessed in this world; or ever were, or ever will be. Therefore, you cannot have them. You are greatly deceived, neighbor.

"It is true, you did not get up the deception. Ages long gone by did that; and you have received it of them, as you have your education and learning. The time has been one of great ignorance, you know; and we are led to hope that the Holy Spirit speaks to the Romans, as well as the Athenians, when he says: 'The times of this ignorance God winked at: but now he commands all men every where to

repent, because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained.'—The Lord is at hand: the righteous judge is at the door.

"Therefore, cast away your images; abandon the delusion of your ancestors, and confide in the word of God. So you shall escape both the sin and shame of continuing a system of deception, and handing it down to posterity."

What if he lift up his voice now? It has no longer any power to terrify; for it is quite emptied of royal majesty, and heavenly authority. What if he beat with his keys? He smites only the air; he cannot reach the man who stands on the high ground of faith in the kingdom of heaven and its keys, both alike in the world to come: though that man dwells in Rome. Politically, he might wound him; but religiously he can do him no harm. Therefore, I pity the deluded key-bearer; for his training has been in the school of delusion; and in the main ground of his error, (the existence of the kingdom of heaven in the church,) he is supported by Protestants and Catholics in common. I will not contend with him for the kingdom; but will cheerfully show him that the kingdom itself, and the keys of it alike belong to the resurrection of the dead, and to the future state, in the world to come. Therefore, that the kingdom does not need a vicegerent, before it comes, the Pope can see for himself: and, that when it comes, the King, our Lord, brings it with him, is a plain truth, so that the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

By challenging the existence of the kingdom of heaven in this world, the Roman is dethroned at once. His triple tiara cannot save him: because it cannot prove that its wearer is in a kingdom *yet to come:* nor can any ingenuity, or effrontery, avail to impose upon mortals the belief of the Pope's supremacy, in the right of the keys of a kingdom, which has no place in this world. By refusing to believe that Peter

himself is in the receipt of his keys, until the day in which Abraham and all the faithful receive the promises, (Heb. 11: 39, 40.) the Pope is disarmed, as well as dethroned: both sceptre and crown fall away from him: and, Samson being shorn, he becomes like any other man in all eyes.

I both challenge the existence of the kingdom of heaven in this world; and, also, deny that Peter *received the keys* of that kingdom in this world; and seeing that the Holy Scriptures do not teach the doctrine, I will, in due time show the heretic of whom Rome learned it: and the world of Rome.

THE COMMON DOCTRINE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN THIS WORLD.

"Jesus, our Lord, arise,
"Scatter our enemies,
"And make them fall!
"Let thine almighty aid,
"Our sure defence be made:
"Our souls on thee be staid;
"Lord, hear our call!"

John Baptist came preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mat. 3: 2.) The commentators refer this, at once, to the Lord's ministry and church. And, when, in the beginning of his preaching, the Lord says the same words, they understand him to mean the same thing, *to wit*, his own ministry and his own church! And, when the Lord sent forth the twelve and the seventy to preach the same words, they take them to mean the same thing, *to wit*, the church and the gospel dispensation; and they refer to Daniel 2: 44, with one consent, in proof of the interpretation!

This is an easy way to go, after the first step is taken, to the very last, which launches the commentators into the

grossest absurdity. It is supposed that John's ministry had sole reference to the Lord's church. That point being taken, the others are easily taken. However, Dan. 2: 44, will not defend them, when taken; nor can any thing deliver them one and all from the dire overthrow of this absurd conclusion:

"The Lord's preaching, then, was the gospel of his church, the good news of his church, the glad tidings of his church! And his *gospel* of the church ceased at the institution of his church, and now we have no gospel; because the news of a thing cannot run after the thing! It is only *news* before the thing; it cannot be good news afterward and glad tidings following behind the thing!"

Therefore, this is the dispensation of the gospel yet: glad tidings preceding the kingdom of Messiah yet, *preached* by his church concerning his future kingdom: and neither John the Baptist meant the church, when he said the kingdom of heaven is at hand, nor did the Lord, who repeated it after him: nor does Daniel 2: 44, mean the church. The church is the *preacher* of the glad tidings of eternal life. The inventor of the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven come, did not pretend to its having come in the church. He did not dream of its being the church; but those who received it of him gave it this gentle twist for the church, after he was buried; and they found the way to read the scriptures *backwards*, so as to make the gospel the messenger of itself, and the church the pillar of itself,—Babylon, instead of the messenger of the future state, and the pillar of the truth of the coming Messiah in the kingdom of heaven: while the inventor of the doctrine thought only to read the scriptures *upwards*, from the grovelling letter of earth, to the spiritual meanings of heaven. Origen rejected the use of Jacob's ladder, which is faith, to favor one of his own invention, which is a figurative interpretation. On this he attained the kingdom of heaven at will, and even brought it down in his way

to men: but it is wholly due to his pupils and followers, to give the kingdom a local habitation in this world, to describe it with boundaries of the church militant; and finally to set a man over it, in the Lord's name, to control it, with the keys of the Apostle Peter, by the right of succession to the inheritance!

This is the way the doctrine of error, making the church the kingdom, came into the world,—by Origen's ladder of a figurative interpretation: and this is the key to its reception among all denominations of Christians,—*the Pope's keys*, which formerly swayed the entire church for his kingdom: and when the bold Reformers wrested the sceptre from the Pope, they left the doctrine of the kingdom in this world, without a tenant for the earthly throne. Theirs was a great work; but the reformation is not complete with the rejection of the worldly king over the church: it requires the rejection also of the doctrine of the worldly kingdom, which the Reformers suffered to remain; and we have it from Origen, through Rome, and not from the Bible.

But seeing that the doctrine is received among all denominations, some texts of scripture must be taken to favor it: and so they are.—No child-like reader, no plain reader of the scriptures, would of himself suspect the possible existence of the doctrine, from the texts quoted to support it; but when the doctrine comes with the teachings of his infancy and youth, unsuspected into his mind; then the texts, quoted in support of it, have a very plausible show of strength; and they effectually cover the deformity of the doctrine, from the common mind.

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS COME UNTO YOU."

"If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, *then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*" (Mat. 12: 28.) The words italicised are in the original the same in Luke 11: 20, as in Matthew quoted here: but they are translated differently: "*No doubt, the kingdom of God is come upon you.*" *Αρα εφθασεν εφ' υμας η Βασιλεια του Θεου.—Εφθασεν* which is translated, "*is come unto,*" is imperfectly translated: it means more than "*is come unto:*" it means *prævenit*—"has sooner come unto you; has come before the set time; has come in anticipation of its true period." The very manifestation of the kingdom at its coming, will be in the casting out of Satan from this earth, and destroying all his armor, wherein he trusted; and also the race in the flesh, whom he has corrupted effectually in the fall of Adam; and therefore, our Lord rebukes their calumny, who said he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, reminding them of the true nature of Messiah's kingdom, and reasoning with them, to show how they should sooner think that glorious kingdom had come already, than that Satan is divided against himself.

For the Lord does reason with them. His reply to their calumny is composed, I think, of three interrogative sentences; the last of which, however, the translation renders affirmatively, without the form of a question. The three sentences are consecutive; they all begin with an "if," and the spirit of the reply requires that the last should end with a question, as well as the two former: "If Satan be divided,—how shall his kingdom stand? And, if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? But if I by the finger of God cast out devils, *αρα εφθασεν εφ' υμας η Βασιλεια του Θεου*, has not the kingdom of God sooner come unto you?—Or, the kingdom of God has sooner come *unto you.*" This is the way to keep up the reasoning, and

lively spirit, and unanswerable manner of the reply, increasing its powerful impression upon the reader, in a climax of questions, that for their great plainness answer themselves; and for their great force, entirely dissipate the calumny of his enemies. But to translate the last sentence affirmatively, does not materially vary the impression of the whole truth on the mind.

And now, intelligent reader, you can believe this; and although you may have a better way of explaining the passage, you can allow that this explanation is not altogether bad. There is, at least, something plausible in it, and nothing absolutely offensive to good sense, or to sound doctrine. I am sure you must think so: for this is the only passage in the New Testament, in which our translation reports the kingdom of heaven to have come already; and the original does not absolutely do it here. You may be surprised to hear this is the only place, in which our New Testament pronounces the kingdom of God, or of heaven, or of Messiah, to be among the things present, and already come: and it should not do it here, in justice to the original.

There are passages of this sort:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:" which the other beatitudes, with common sense, and universal experience and observation, explain of the world to come, and not of this world. It is the manner of the Holy Spirit to declare of a thing future, the certainty of which God would deeply impress upon the heart of man, in the time present, as if it were in hand already: "theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven;" and no soul of man truly "*poor in spirit*," hesitates for one moment so to understand the word, in respect to his own mind and faith and hope.

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU."

"O grant us grace, Almighty Lord,
"To read and mark thy holy word;
"Its truths with meekness to receive,
"And by its holy precepts live."

The curious Pharisees, on one occasion, demanded to know of Jesus: "*when* the kingdom of God should come." This is the question every age of the world puts to the preacher of the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven at hand:" "You say it is at hand, I want to know when it is going to come?"—Mark the answer of the Great King, and reverence his words, which proud Pharisees in Jerusalem could not do.

"He answered them, and said: The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." He surely did not mean to say his kingdom was absolutely in the hearts of these Pharisees, and yet to them was the word spoken. They *demanded* of him an impertinent question; and he replied for their correction, not for their satisfaction. They looked for Messiah's kingdom in this world; and they would know of him, who preached it at hand, *when* it should come. He replied: "It does not come with outward show, and the pomp of this world; as you suppose. You cannot say: Lo here, it is Jerusalem: Lo there, it is the church! If you would have an interest in it, when it comes, as you seem to desire, look not for it in this world, or in the gospel dispensation: look within you; bethink yourselves. Your way to see it, is through repentance unto life eternal, and through a change of heart."

This was a gracious answer to their forward question, turning their impertinent demand into an occasion of giving

heavenly advice and instruction, worthy of the Lord Je-
nd wholly above the power of any man not actuated by
oly Spirit. The reply is profitable in every age, to re-
the too confident spirit of man in the calculations of the
"which the Father hath kept in his own power." And
pprove of such calculations. The scriptures furnish
or approaching them with an accuracy, that may well
e people of this and of succeeding ages, to the office of
l, who, having found out by the books, that the time of
's captivity was well nigh accomplished, anxiously
t by the use of extraordinary means of grace, to pre-
himself and his people, humbly to receive the great fa-
God.

man supposes for one moment, that the Lord meant to
e kingdom was in the proud heart of the unbelieving
sees; and yet to them only was the word spoken:
kingdom of God is within you"—at the same time, he
l from them immediately on this word, to warn his
le disciples as follows.

nd he said unto the disciples: The days will come,
ye shall desire to see *one of the days* of the Son of Man,
e shall not see it. And they shall say unto you, See
or See there! Go not after them, nor follow them.
s the lightning, that lighteth out of the one part under
n, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall
he Son of Man be in his day. But first must he suffer
things of this generation." (Luke 17: 20 to 26.)

at his disciples need not be misled by this word to the
sees, he cautioned them instantly, that though they
d desire to see one of the days of his kingdom,
should not see it in this world. And, that their ardent
e for it, and their zeal, should not betray them in any
lo believe the false prophets, who would come with the
al affirmation of these times: "Here is the kingdom
aven! See here! or see there! It is the church, the

very gospel of itself!—Lo here; it is the church; or lo there it is the gospel dispensation in the millennium!"—in order, I say, to save them from being carried away by their own fond desire of this kingdom, and misled to believe the many false prophets, who should come in his name, preaching the kingdom here, or there, in this world, he warns all beforehand, that its coming will be like the lightning of heaven, which shows plainly for itself, and does not need that one should inform another of its vivid flash; for no one under the canopy of heaven can fail to see instantly when it appears, before another can have time to say see here; or see there!—Even "so shall also the coming of the Son of man be in his day, [and kingdom,] but first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation." Nothing can be plainer; not the lightning itself.

My heart faints in this view of my own past delusion, and of the prevalent delusion of my brethren, in respect to the very thing, upon which the Lord here graciously warns us not to be deceived. "Therefore, say unto the house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord God, Repent, and turn from your idols, and turn away your faces from all your abominations.—They shall bear the punishment of their iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him; that the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions: but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord God." (Ez. 14: 6, 10, 11.)

"NOT TASTE OF DEATH, UNTIL THEY SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

The next passage which I notice, for the reliance placed in it, to support the belief of the kingdom of heaven long come in this world, is that found in (Mat. 16 : 28 ; Mark 9 : 1 : Luke 9 : 27 ;) where it is said : "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, until they see the kingdom of God." The natural inference is, that the time of the kingdom must begin before all the men of that age died.—But let it be borne in mind that the Lord purposely concealed the time of his kingdom, not only from the haughty Pharisees, but from all men, even his chosen disciples. In this place he speaks of it as future, and not having come, as the Holy Spirit in the gospel uniformly does : and he speaks of it in a connection that is uniform, and very peculiar in the three Evangelists, who record this word. In the first place, the word here relied upon to prove the kingdom to have already come, is every where introduced by a solemn and unequivocal reference to the judgment day : as in Matthew : For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels ; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

"And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them."

The same connection precisely is followed in Mark and Luke. The coming here spoken of, is, therefore, to be taken for his final coming to judgment in the end of the world. "The glory of his Father with the angels," marks the character of that coming again, in a way not to be mistaken : and that signified by the words, "and then he shall reward *every man* according to his works," demonstrates it to be the judg-

ment day, both of the righteous, and of the wicked: of the just and of the unjust.

The coming of which he spoke, therefore, was the coming to judgment; and no mode of interpretation is equal to the explanation of the passage, which limits "the coming in his kingdom," which some standing there should see before they died, to any condition of things, or event in this world, or the church, or the gospel dispensation, save only to the transfiguration, which followed some days after, and in all the narratives follows immediately after. Peter, in his second Epistle, refers to this scene in the following terms:

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty;—when we were with him in the holy mount." (2 Pet. 1: 16, 18.)

I think he means by this, to say, that he had not preached a fabulous coming and kingdom of our Lord, to be manifested in the end of this world; though it may seem from the highly wrought descriptions, and from its impending interest, and yet protracted delay, to be a cunningly devised fable: for we were eye-witnesses of the glorious power and excellent majesty of his coming kingdom, when we were with him in the holy mount of transfiguration.

No interpretation of this passage will serve, which leaves out of account the last great day: and the doctrine, that the church is the kingdom of which he spoke, will not relieve the difficulty. For the remark, that there be some standing here, (it is well observed by a friend,) would lose all its point, if by the kingdom here, the church be understood. Not only *some*, standing there, but every one, so far as appears of record, except only Judas Iscariot, did not taste of death, until they saw the coming of his church, and its full development in action. Therefore, if the coming in his kingdom, be the erection of his church, how did *some*, rather than many and all, standing there, see the event before they

tasted of death? such an interpretation would destroy the point and force of the whole expression, and rob it of its deep personal interest.

If one say, then, "He intended his coming to destroy Jerusalem;" I dissent, because I think it easy to explain the passages, in which it is supposed he signified his coming in that work of destruction, without the necessity of believing that his coming and kingdom, in the New Testament, means, in any place, an event and a condition of things, to occur before the end of the world. I am opposed to *Janus*-faced interpretations, which look before and behind, which stare in opposite directions, which are now on the forehead, and anon are behind the back. I consent to none of them, which look not straight forward, with a steady eye; and in matters of faith, with a single eye. The coming and kingdom of our Lord is an article of faith wholly, and not of sight. The preaching of it is addressed to our faith, and not to our sight. By faith through time we are pledged and exhorted to strive to enter into it, and to press into it. Once in, the strife is over; but that is not in this world, nor in the church. In the church we continue to live by faith, we walk by faith, and not by sight of the kingdom, depending on the promise of God, and not on the fine prospects of this world.

When the Lord descended from the mount of transfiguration, he found his disciples congregated about a poor lunatic, striving in vain to cast out the demon, which he effected at his coming by a word. This may be a type of the state of things at his coming again, in the end of the world, from the heavenly mount of excellent glory; when his people, his beloved disciples, will be still striving with the god of this world, to cast him out, to quell his violence, and to cure his afflicted and possessed lunatics of all nations; but "they could not." The demon would not go out for them, to their great surprise: but the god of this world yields to our returning Savior.

The Lord has borne long with this "faithless and perverse generation." Long he has suffered our faithless labors, to spread the gospel, to proclaim his saving grace to the nations; and before we have gone, in our slow and unbelieving course, over the cities of the earth, the Son of Man will come. (Mat. 10: 23.) Before the church has visited, by its gospel messengers, all the cities of the earth, the Lord will probably return and come. He is able to cast out the enemy, and to bruise him under our feet; and the promise is from the beginning, that he will do it; and from the days of the gospel, that he will do it *shortly*. (Rom. 16: 20.)

"BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD."

In the touching appeal of the Lord to the city of Jerusalem, he declares: "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Mat. 29: 30. Luke 13: 35.) Yet they cried out after this, "Away with him, crucify him." So the passage is not easily understood of the gospel dispensation, and is by no means to be set in conflict with other plain passages, referring it to a time yet future. In any construction, the time spoken of must be future yet; for since the day he said it, his name has been held in reproach and contempt by the people of the Jews. Neither they nor their city have ever yet said: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord Jesus."—They will say it, when every knee bows before him, "who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom." (2 Tim. 4: 1.)

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT MEAT AND DRINK; BUT RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE AND JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST."

(*Romans* 14: 17.)

"Oh, where shall rest be found,
"Rest for the weary soul?
"'Twere vain the ocean depth to sound,
"Or pierce to either pole.
"The world can never give,
"The bliss for which we sigh:
"'Tis not the *whole* of life to live,
"Nor all of death to die.
"Beyond this vale of tears
"There is a life above,
"Unmeasured by the flight of years;
"And all that life is love."

This passage is very powerful in many excellent minds, to convince them, that the kingdom of God is come. It is not to be expected that opinions long wedded to the heart, in connection with so gracious words of holy writ, will be readily exchanged for new opinions; nor is it to be desired. Great changes in the world must be gradual, or a dangerous violence of action will overthrow both truth and error in one common ruin. Therefore, it does not dishearten me, when the wise and learned disavow this unusual doctrine; and with piety, hold fast to their old faith. They should do so yet. The mortified and dead flesh is so intimately united with the living in the healing wound of the human body, that neither surgeon, nor sufferer, can exactly tell where the separation between the living and the dead will take place. It is necessary to wait the action of the vital energies, that they may determine with safety and accuracy the boundary between the two, and may also of their own healthful action throw off the dead parts, and cast them out of the healing wound in the body.

Much more is this necessary in the wounded faith: as we see fully exhibited in the time of the change from the Mosaic

to the gospel dispensation, under the direct admonition of Christ, and of the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and of the apostles. The apostles themselves were years in coming to a right and consistent view of the subject; and required line upon line, and precept upon precept, before they could give up the law for their Savior. And, so in the great Reformation under Luther, it is instructive to see, while the pillars of the fabric of their faith were shaken in regard to the Pope, and to images and to saints, how the public mind was still swayed by the Pope, and by the reverence of the saints, to adore them less and less, but by no means to surrender them all at once, to the condemnation of idols, and to the reproach of sin.

But I think that any reader of the 14th chapter of Romans must have it first well settled in his mind, that the kingdom of heaven is in this world, before he would find proof of it there. The apostle is speaking of things indifferent, for which we ought not to grieve a brother, or to cause him to offend. "If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let us, therefore, follow after the things that make for peace."

The apostle would teach them how to obtain the kingdom of heaven, by coming into the likeness of it, in righteousness of conduct, in peace and quietness of mind, and joy of heart in the Holy Ghost. In these graces, we must serve the Lord now, if we would be accepted of him, in the day of judgment, and the kingdom of heaven. To eat and drink, or not, of certain things doubtful among the weak, neither makes one better nor worse; but the heavenly temper is essential to the heir of the heavenly kingdom, and that will not permit us, lightly and wantonly to lay a stumbling block before our bro-

ther, by which he is led to offend against his own conscience, and the law of God.

This is the scope of the doctrine of Romans 14: 17. It has no aim, or power, to reverse by itself alone, the great doctrine of the kingdom of heaven at hand. It is a powerful text, to show the true and large extent of Christian charity: that even in matters of our daily food, we should be scrupulous of the feelings and prejudices of our brethren in the faith, if we would come to the righteousness, peace, and joy of the kingdom of heaven. It is a most gracious word, and comforting, especially to the poor souls who were troubled about meats and drinks, in ways of heathenism, and, also, of Jewish customs, unknown to us: but by no means is it a word to teach that the kingdom of heaven is in this world, so much as to guide us in the way to attain to it in the world to come: that we need not by eating, or abstaining, think to serve God, and find entrance into the heavenly kingdom; but rather by righteousness, and the pursuit of peace, and the demonstration of joy in the Holy Ghost; "*for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*"

"I WILL GIVE UNTO THEE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

"Cease, ye pilgrims, cease to mourn;
"Press onward to the prize:
"Soon your Saviour will return,
"Triumphant in the skies.
"Yet a season and you know,
"Happy entrance will be given.
"All your sorrows left below,
"And earth exchanged for heaven."

These are words of grave import in any connection, and especially in this. They weigh on many minds, precisely

as they do with the Pope, to persuade man, that the Lord gave some power here to Peter, which has come down in the ministry, through all ages, whether to one bishop only with the Romans; or to all bishops with the Episcopalians, or to all pastors, or elders, with Presbyterians and others. Now Peter, and Peter alone, has the solemn promise of the King in person: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," which will surely be kept with all fidelity; and will be fulfilled in the eyes of the angels and glorified saints, in the day, when all the faithful come to receive and enter into the everlasting inheritance of the things promised; Abraham and his seed their heavenly Canaan, and celestial city: Paul and all who with him love the appearing of the Lord, their crown of righteousness, "which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me in that day," and Peter his promised keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Mean what the promise may, there is no record made on earth of the presentment of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter: but a record only of the promise that he shall have them. *That* we are bound to believe, and no more. We are bound to believe that the Lord will keep all his promises to the letter; and among them, this also to Peter: and to believe more is folly, which has plunged the Bishop of Rome into madness, and the church into apostacy and distraction; and has filled the world for ages with oppression, guilt, sorrow, and wo. All the enormities of papal power have been perpetrated in the name of the apostle Peter, and by the authority conferred in the inheritance of his apostolic keys of the kingdom of heaven; when Peter never had the keys, and, therefore, could not have left them to any heir, whether of Roman, or Carthagenian birth and lineage. The Lord requires men to believe just as he says, and neither more nor less: he requires implicit faith in his word;—a faith which neither adds a word, nor diminishes a tittle from what he has spoken. He does not require us

to believe, that Peter has *received* the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He has not recorded the donation; but only the promise of it. The belief that the promise has been fulfilled is wholly gratuitous on the part of men; and is uncalled for; and is productive of much mischief; and has wrought, in cyclopean furnaces, chains, not for the liberties of nations only; but, strange to say, chains for the word of God, to confine the preacher, and to lock up the record from the famishing nations of the earth, even from the intelligent citizens of christendom; chains, which to this day "wear out the Saints of the Most High." God be praised for his righteousness and truth! His truth is in the letter of his word, and no man may believe more, or less at his peril: his righteousness is in chastising christendom with that sceptre, which it put falsely in Gods' name into the hands of Peter and of the Pope. God be devoutly praised for a simple and righteous view of this subject, in his word, which even at this late day, gently disarms the Roman Hercules of his formidable club, with which the Pope has slain whole nations, and sent great multitudes to people the realms of death. The shepherd sling, and smooth stone of the stripling of Israel, were not more fatal to the proud Goliah, than the plain truth of the kingdom of heaven is to the haughty claims of the preud champion of Babylon. It is impossible for the Pope, or for Peter himself, to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and of the world to come; until Jesus comes in his kingdom, to make all things new in heaven and earth; when the heirs of the promises shall receive their crowns and harps and pledges of the divine favor for an everlasting possession, at once and together, even in the day of "the Lord Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom." On this account not only Paul and all saints, long for and desire the coming of the Lord Jesus,—"press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," —"for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time, are

not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us :" but even the lower creation is earnestly waiting for the "manifestation of the sons of God." "For we know, (adds the apostle,) that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together, until now. And not only they, but ourselves, also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body :" (Rom. 8 : 18, 19, 22, 23.)—which must be awaited, until the resurrection of the dead ; for then only is the redemption of our body.

It is worthy of notice that the same remarkable man and accredited heretic, whose name is an abomination in both the Greek and Latin churches, throughout all their borders, and in all their generations, is the inventer of both the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven come, and also of the keys of the kingdom having been received by Peter, for Peter's own personal use. * Origen had no more idea of the Pope's using Peter's keys, to open and shut heaven upon poor souls at the Pope's will ; than the Pope himself has, that he is wholly indebted to that detested heretic of Egypt, for the sole invention of the doctrine of Peter's keys and kingdom, with the power of which the Roman sways whole nations, and shakes the wide earth ; causing men and women even in this age and republic, whose farms are fruitful of the produce of their own toil, and whose houses are furnished with the abundance of heaven's blessings on their own industry, to confess all that the Roman's commissioned officer may require of them, even to the light or to the guilty thoughts of their heart, and to the secret emotions of their inmost bosom and soul : and causing them one day, or two, in the week, to eat, or not to eat, meat, at his Roman will ; and firing them with a spiritual pride, which flashes with proud contempt

* I have examined this subject, and the result is summed up in manuscript, to be had when called for.

upon all the *new light* doctrines and followers of Luther and Washington and Edwards.

But I will not mock thee, O Roman; for thou art a man, and I am no more. We occupy a little space on this footsool, and have a brief span of this life at the best. We must stand at the same bar of God in the kingdom of heaven, and be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and to the light and knowledge and talents God has given us, to occupy for his glory, and to employ for the benefit of our fellow men. The air I have been given to breathe from infancy is not that of a poisoned monastery. The institutions of my country are not trammelled with the superstitions of the dark ages. The American churches trust not in the intercessions of the blessed virgin: American christians ask not the Holy Spirit at the hands of any man on earth, not even the Pope; but of God only, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, why should an American, in the glorious liberty, which, under the law of Christ, God has given him, rail at the delusion of the Pope, or mock at the errors of the nations, which worship idols of gold and silver and stone?—I will not do it. My heart shall rather be broken with the woes of the suffering nations, led astray by the doctrines of the God of this world, and oppressed with every form of injustice, robbery, degradation, and cruelty; and my mouth shall be shut against condemnation now, lest in the judgment day it be shut for me, by the uprising of those very nations of sinners and worshippers of images and of devils, and by their condemning both me and my countrymen, who are exalted in point of privileges: for that if they had known the things that we know and might tell them, they would have turned wholly to the Lord, and repented long ago of their sinful ways, and would have sought with earnestness, by the love and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, also to turn all other people from Satan unto God.

Therefore, I would not reproach the Pope, or malign his deluded followers. They are all led by the same enemy, blindfold, who is permitted to rule this world, until the day of the Lord Jesus. And I look for no deliverer in political christianity; no righteous administration of law and justice, under the God of this world; no Savior in the institutions of freedom, and in the equal rights of my countrymen, to go forth with excellent example, and lovely influence, softening away the prejudices of the world, reducing its exactions, and changing the yokes of iron to wood, and the yokes of wood to pliant withes; until men have learned self-government; and the wolf and the lamb dwell together; until the nations have acquired the habit of self control, and the people are delivered alike from the tyranny of the law, and from the tyranny and violence of their own passions.

These are halcyon days of earthly hope that nobler minds are expecting: and are earnestly seeking to introduce. The Lord speed the plough, speed the ship, speed the loom, speed the knowledge of his laws, and the gospel of his kingdom: and make the generous minds, who labor for a glorious day of "*peace and safety*" in this world, truly wise to discern between the evil and the good, between the prince of this world, and the Prince of the life of the world to come. To me it seems clear that no doctrine of reform, that no improvement of the human race, that no law of national self-control, and universal peace and happiness, can be found or invented, to equal in simplicity and force, the words which our Lord began to preach and to say: "Repent;" that is, bethink yourselves; "for the kingdom of Jesus and of heaven has come nigh unto you."—And this does not mean a glorious condition of things in "this present *evil* world;" but the future state of heavenly bliss, which Jesus will bring with him, from his Father's throne, and will establish in everlasting righteousness, in the new earth.

THE PARABLES OF THE MUSTARD SEED AND LEAVEN.

These have a strong hold of many excellent and sound minds, bracing their confidence in the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven already come. But, together with all parables of the Lord, illustrating the kingdom of heaven, these have their manifestation, their *denouement*, in the future state. In this life, the kingdom is in word only, a mustard seed sown in the ground, or leaven hidden in meal, which none would perceive by the eye, or suspect, or, for the appearance, would value. But the word is not the kingdom, my friend; neither is the mustard seed, nor the leaven, the kingdom. Even the gospel of the kingdom comes "not in word *only*; but also, in power, and in the Holy Ghost," (1 Thes. 1 : 5.) and how much more is the kingdom itself not in word, but in power?

All the parables show a preparation in this life, for the kingdom of heaven, in the life to come: and so the mustard seed is a plant of heavenly growth, of which in this life, we behold only the seed. The birds of the air rest in its branches, not in this life, but in the world to come, or the kingdom of heaven. According with these simple lines:

"This little seed from heaven
"Shall soon become a tree;
"This ever blessed leaven
"Diffused abroad must be;
"Till God the Son shall come again,
"It must go on; amen, amen!"

The Householder and his Vineyard.

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHALL BE TAKEN FROM YOU, AND GIVEN TO A NATION BRINGING FORTH THE FRUITS THEREOF." (Mat. 21: 43.)

"When thou, my righteous judge, shall come,
"To fetch thy ransomed people home,
"Shall I among them stand?
"Shall such a worthless worm as I,
"Who sometimes am afraid to die,
"Be found at thy right hand?"

This parable the chief priests and Pharisees took to themselves; and no one forbade them. We let them have it and their city, with hearty good will: not considering that with David in his condemnation of the robber and oppressor: "Thou art the man!" For the parable was spoken, with all the Lord's parables, to us, although they were heard by the Jews only, at his lips. The entire gospel was spoken and limited, first, it must be remembered, to the Jews only: and when it was enlarged to embrace the Gentiles, the Gentiles came not to a part in its promises alone; but to a part, also, in its warnings and its threatenings. And our part, as Gentiles, in this parable, is far from being obscure, or of little importance.

The hinge of the parable is the slaying of the Lord's messengers, who came from time to time, for his rent: and their finally seizing his Son, who came peaceably to them, and their murdering him, in hopes now to inherit the vineyard, seeing that the heir is dead."—"This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance! And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him."

Now, who reasoned among themselves, saying: "This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be

ours?" (Luke 20 : 14.) It was Pilate and Herod at the instigation of the Jews. The Roman had an eye to the inheritance, even at that early day : therefore, he gave sentence against the "appointed heir of all things." Pilate would have saved Jesus alive. His conviction of the innocence of Jesus, and of the malice of the Jews against the Lord, inclined him to deliver their victim. The admonition of his wife, sent to him, while he was upon the judgment seat, saying : " Have nothing to do with that just man : for I have suffered many things this day, in a dream concerning him," could not fail to have influenced the Roman governor, to discharge his prisoner. So when he had him whipped, like a slave, and crowned with the thorns, and the purple robe put on him, Pilate brought him forth to the Jews, thinking their vengeance must be glutted now. " Behold the man !" What a pitiable spectacle ! But the Jews disappointed him. They cried out : " Crucify him ; crucify him.—Pilate said take ye him and crucify him for I find no fault in him."

Pilate evidently shrunk from the responsibility of this murder. If the Jews would have his life, let them take it in, their own way. He did not refuse them liberty, even to crucify him : " Take ye him and crucify him." They however, declined the deed. They said : " We have a law ; and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself *the Son of God.* When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying, he was the more afraid." And he went back into the judgment hall, and tried to learn of Jesus, who he was, and whence he came. But the Lord made no reply to the man, who had scourged him, knowing him to be innocent. Then Pilate recollected his power, as governor, to crucify, or to release him, as he would. " Jesus answered, thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above. Therefore, he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to

release him." But the Jews cried out, If you let this man go, you are not Cesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh treason against the emperor. When Pilate, therefore, heard that, he brought Jesus forth, and said to the Jews: Behold your king! But they cried out saying: Away with him; away with him; crucify him!—Pilate said: Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered: We have no king but Cesar. Then Pilate gave up Jesus to be crucified, in accordance with the Roman law: having the superscription of his accusation written and placed high on the cross: "THE KING OF THE JEWS."—Behold his crime: HE IS THE HEIR!

This wonderful scene can never be enough studied. Angels may desire to look into it: for unfathomable are its mysteries to the creature's mind.—However, this view of the subject presents it in one new light to my own mind: *to wit:* that the Jews could not themselves put him to death, nor even the Romans, until the question arose about the inheritance of the vineyard, or the throne of this world. When the Jews raised that question, and complained of his want of fidelity to the emperor, if Pilate should let this man go, the Roman yielded: for the sake of the inheritance, he gave up their king to be crucified: and for the sake of a verdict against Jesus, the chief priests confessed: "We have no *king* but Cesar."

So, this was what settled the crucifixion, *viz.* the determination on all hands, that Cesar should not have a competitor for the throne, nor the Romans meet with any obstacle to the inheritance of Jerusalem and its dependencies, together with the rest of the world. And accurately they fulfil'ed the words of the parable: "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." This was the consideration, that led the Roman governor to give sentence against him. This was the argument that overcame his purpose of saving Jesus.

Therefore, the Roman governor condemned the Son of God; Roman soldiers executed him, on a Roman cross, with his accusation written over his head: and in due time the Roman bishop seized on the supposed inheritance, and lorded it with a high hand over the vineyard, and ruled the nations with terrific power, as the vicar and vicegerent of Christ and of God.

Wonderful fulfilment of the character delineated in the parable!

"When the Lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto *those* husbandmen? They say unto him: He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out the vineyard, unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." (Mat. 21: 40, 41.) Not those only will the Lord destroy who demanded his death, but also those who gave sentence against him for the sake of the inheritance, and who actually executed him; and thought to have seized the possession of his inheritance: and for many centuries have braved his laws, and denied his word, while they have sought to rule in his holy name.

"Therefore, said the Lord, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." v. 43. You, who are guilty of these things: from *you* shall it be taken.

It would seem wholly unsuitable to take the kingdom from those who had demanded his crucifixion, merely to bestow it on them who had actually crucified him; and that not for any fault in him, but solely because they would be rid of him, as the heir; and would have undisturbed possession of the government of the world. It would seem also wholly unnatural, to take the kingdom from the Jews, and give it to the Romans, as a people who should bring forth the fruits of the vineyard, and render them in their season to the household-

er: for Jerusalem never furnished haughtier Pharisees, or more subtle scribes, or by far so imperial Pontiffs, as the Babylon of the New Testament has long furnished. Therefore, it cannot be that Rome has received the kingdom of heaven: because Rome does not yield the fruits of it in their season. Nor has any nation received it, least of all, the murderers of the heir, and the guilty authors of an attempt to seize on the inheritance of the Son of God: but the kingdom is taken from this world altogether, and from flesh and blood, and it is held in reserve, for the coming of the Son of man, in the end of the world; to be by him conferred on the generation of the just in the resurrection of the dead. They will render of the fruits of the vineyard in their season, in the world to come and in the life everlasting.

And who are the chief priests of the Jews, according to this parable, but the professors of religion, in all ages of the gospel dispensation, throughout Christendom, who have sacrificed their Lord and Master to the favor of the God of this world, and to the emperor, to the popular will, or the Cesar of their country and age? Those Jews have a generation of their own from that day to this, in the capitol of Christendom, in the mistress of the kingdoms of this world, and its dependencies, of all nations, and denominations.

And who are they that do the will of the Jews, nailing the Lord of the whole earth to the wood, for the sake of the inheritance of the world; but the rulers of the nations, wherever they may be, who administer the laws for their own gain instead of the divine glory? Cesar has, also, a generation of men that, in every age, would not scruple to perform a deed of flagitious cruelty, and rank wickedness, in order to please the people, and to retain the power over the vineyard. And the kingdom of heaven is taken from the Jews, and not given to the Romans; but it is taken from both Jews and Gentiles, and altogether from the race of Adam in the flesh; and it will be given to the sons of the

second Adam; "who are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection,"—the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, who follow the Lord in the regeneration, and are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Pet. 1: 23.) The Lord grant that you, my reader, with me, may be accounted worthy to receive the kingdom of God.

Other passages occur in the New Testament, to support the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven already come; but these are commonly presented, by my friends, in the way of testing my view, as the strongest that can be furnished. If these be satisfactorily expounded in any way, (and doubtless the learned reader will see often a better way, than I have taken,) to teach not the existence of the kingdom of heaven in flesh and blood, as we are expressly assured flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of heaven; ("Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God:" Cor. 15: 50,) then there are no other passages in the Bible, I think, that can be relied on to support it.

For when Paul gives "thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the *inheritance of the saints in light*: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the *kingdom* of his dear Son;" (Col. 1: 12, 13,) he speaks the language of strong faith, which "is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;" and no reader will be misled by that word; except he may have imbibed his error from other sources, when this word will easily confirm him in it. "The inheritance of the saints in light" is well understood to be with every inheritance, an estate future, and here it is plainly the same thing, as the "*kingdom* of his dear Son," mentioned immediately after; and it settles the meaning of

the expression, to apply by faith to the future state; and not to a present kingdom.

It is only passages of this sort, that are left to oppose the positive and unqualified and oft-repeated declaration of our Lord: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." And these do not oppose it. No, no; by a strong faith they anticipate it.

PARABLE OF THE NOBLEMAN, AND TEN POUNDS.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
"Does his successive journies run:
"His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
"Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

Having now answered with candor, and I hope with general satisfaction, the hard questions out of the gospel, which are much urged in opposition to the views presented in this treatise; I, in turn, ask leave to propound one out of the gospel, for solemn consideration, before I take up the prophecy of Daniel.

Please open in Luke 19: 11, where it is written:

"And he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and *because they thought* the kingdom of God should immediately appear." Yes, they expected a millennium in earnest, and that quickly: and they might with some show of reason; for the Messiah was with them; and they had preached his kingdom at hand; and they had heard of great changes to be made in Jerusalem, at this visit; and, therefore, they might be deceived by their hopes, as they certainly were; and the good Lord sought, in this parable, to undeceive, both them and us, in every age of the gospel.

"He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." The Lord himself is the "nobleman." "The far country" of which he speaks, is the existing absence of the Lord from the time of his ascension. "The kingdom" is that which the Father gives him, when all enemies are put under his feet; and, then, he is "*to return*, having received the kingdom."

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered unto them ten pounds; and said unto them: Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us."

The ten pounds are goods, which he bestows in this life, on the people, for the use of which he will call them to account on his return in the life to come. "His citizens" are Christians, who are called after him, as the inhabitants of a city are called after the name of their city; Bostonians, Philadelphians, New Yorkers. "And they hated him;" because they were corrupt, no doubt, and would have their own way, rather than obey his gospel. Their hatred appears to have manifested itself in sending after him, what they did not send directly to him, a message, saying they would have the kingdom without him: they would not have him to come back and reign over them. No; never, never!

"And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading."

The parable teaches that the Lord is now gone, "to receive a kingdom, and to return;" and, again, that he returns *when he has received* the kingdom; and, then, on the judgment seat, he calls before him, both those who have well occupied his trusts; and those who have abused them: and he pronounces sentence upon each forthwith.

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

So their being called by his name did not hinder their rejecting his personal administration of the government; nor will it again hinder him from calling them *his enemies*, and treating them as such, in the judgment day.

Therefore, look for his kingdom, not in this world, as the old Jews did, and still do; but look for it, to be manifested in the end of this world, at the judgment day: and whether Jew or Gentile, beware, my brother, how, for any reason whatever, you give any the least support, or countenance, to the message, which our city openly sends after her Nobleman, saying: "*He will never reign on the earth:*" for his parable is plain to show, that all such will be of light esteem in his judgment, when he returns in his kingdom, to reign forever over the new heavens and new earth.

THE PROPHET DANIEL.

"Waft, waft ye winds, his story,
"And you, ye waters, roll;
"Till like a sea of glory,
"It spreads from pole to pole;
"Till o'er our ransomed nature,
"The Lamb for sinners slain,
"Redeemer, King, Creator,
"In bliss RETURNS TO REIGN."

Feeble support has been found in the New Testament, to the common error of the kingdom of heaven come, already in the church, or gospel dispensation. No doubt, believers in the error can suggest some others, which have escaped my notice. Indeed, I would myself have further sought for them, and would have carefully found them out, had there been more strength in these, which are first and always

brought up by opposers to my view. But having found the common and apparent gospel supports of the error yield at once, on a better examination of their relations, the firmness of their strength rather to the great doctrine, that the kingdom of Messiah is come nigh unto us, the necessity of pursuing the subject further in the New Testament at present, is not urgent. You perceive that the doctrine of the kingdom come, never sprang out of the four gospels; but having pushed up through other ground, it has sought to sustain itself by clinging on any word of the Lord, however little calculated to uphold it in truth, if only a show is made of strengthening it with divine support.

However much in the Old Testament may be calculated indirectly to countenance this universal opinion, or error, only the prophet Daniel is commonly relied upon, for its direct support. And, as I wish to bring out truth alone, and to remove the rust of error from its brilliant page, I begin the examination in the Old Testament, with the writings of that prophet on all hands most relied on for the plain chart of the times of the Gentiles, and of the kingdom of heaven.

I am aware that many of the ancient prophecies, which belong to the world to come, and to the eternal state, are commonly appropriated to the times of the church, and of this transitory state. Tares of error of this kind are growing among the wheat, that neither time nor patience will eradicate ever. But they will be made apparent, and may be cropped down from their present growth, when it is made manifest, that the church is not the kingdom of heaven; but only the messenger of that kingdom, the witness of the coming king in his kingdom; for we shall find that the prophet Daniel forbids, and has no idea, that the gospel dispensation is a kingdom at all, and much less that glorious kingdom, which our Lord preached, and which is to succeed the last of the kingdoms of this world, and is itself eternal. The prophecies of Daniel plainly show, both in the form of the

metallic image, and of the four beasts, that the kingdom of heaven comes from heaven with its king, in a moment, with overwhelming destruction of this world's kingdoms, and thrones; and it rules over all the earth for ever and ever; and is yet to come, as the sequel will plainly reveal and unfold to the believing mind.

And who will not believe the word of God? Who will not believe the prophet Daniel? Are you a statesman? So was he. Are you a nobleman? So was he the son of a king. Are you a wise man? So was he, the chief of the wise men of Babylon in its glory. Are you an honest man? Mark the testimony to Daniel, recorded in the time of Daniel, and confirmed by the scrutiny of time: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, (the land) they should deliver but their own souls, by *their righteousness*, saith the Lord God." (Ez. 14: 14. Repeated in the 20th verse.) "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall deliver but their own souls, by *their righteousness*."

Daniel was an eminently honest man: you may believe him.

So plainly were his predictions fulfilled, concerning the kingdoms, and concerning the time of Messiah's coming and death, that the opposers of Christianity were early put to the hard necessity of declaring the book to have been written, after the events of which it discourses had occurred: and the Jews especially are constrained lightly to esteem the name of Daniel, in whom before the destruction of Jerusalem, that nation gloried.

But it is hard to deny the antiquity of the book of Daniel, for it was translated into Greek, before the Christian era; and before the time of the events respecting Messiah, which are marked in his prophetic page with the accuracy of history, that they should be fulfilled.

And you, who love the Lord, take thought. It was not only the time when Messiah should be cut off, that Daniel foretold to the very year; but he also speaks of other times, which appear to be at hand. He particularly notices a period of twenty-three hundred days, which plainly must expire not long hence.

"*Days*, do you say?"

Ay, days.—If you are a man of sense, you have some calling, or profession, whether to handle a needle, or a quill, or a hammer, or a plough or a tiller, or the type, no matter; and in your calling or profession, there are common words applied to a peculiar and technical use, which all the craft and profession understand instantly; but an apprentice, or a novice, has to learn them.

The calling of a prophet is not so mean a profession, that it may not be allowed common privileges. Surely the prophets may be supposed to have some common words in peculiar use among themselves; which are known instantly to the masters, in their peculiar sense, but which a novice has to learn: and "*days*" is one of those words in the prophets to be understood by years among common men, as certainly as *pi* among printers, is to be understood by indigestible confusion among common men.

King for kingdom, is another technical word among the prophets, which the reader will do well to remember.

I cannot stop to reason on this point; but I take for granted that the prophets mean *years* by the word *days*, and Daniel's term of twenty-three hundred is near its close. For the seventy weeks, (or seventy times seven days, equal to four hundred ninety,) to the death of Messiah, added to eighteen hundred ten, since that memorable event, make twenty-three hundred exactly. And, according to Bible chronology, Jesus was born four years before the common date, and so was crucified in the year 29, but at the age of thirty-three: and

eighteen hundred thirty-nine will be precisely eighteen hundred ten years, since his crucifixion.

I shall not attempt to fix the beginning of the era of Daniel's twenty-three hundred days. If the four hundred ninetieth year of it, were the year of our Lord's crucifixion, the next will be the last year of it. And the wise will at least strive to understand.

It does not take any thing from the overwhelming interest of this subject, that the twelve hundred and sixty years of Revelation, if subtracted from eighteen hundred forty, leaves five hundred eighty: and the manifestation of the Babylonian harlot, may be considered as made certain within one hundred fifty or eighty years from that time.

It would seem, therefore, that the period of 2300 years in Daniel, is very near its end: (but he speaks of other short periods;) and the end of the period of 1260 years in the Apocalypse, cannot be above two hundred removed from us, while it may be much nearer: and all things whatsoever are written in the prophets will shortly be fulfilled, in the end of the world, and the coming and everlasting kingdom of the Son of God. This is a solemn thought: but time does not present one more interesting and important, than, whether our portion is in that kingdom, or without; in this transitory world, or in the eternal world to come.

And if my humble pages have the effect, to put the reader to thinking, and to inquiring of the Lord in his word, and to seeking after the kingdom of heaven: then God grant to the mutual prayers of both author and reader, that we may be delivered in "the time of trouble;" and saved "with every one that shall be found written in the book:" having it graven upon our hearts now, that the time is near come, in which "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." (Dan. 12: 3.)

Therefore, hear the prophet Daniel; for no other like him, has the Lord raised up, to discover to the world the order of its times, unto the end. No man before him, or after, has recorded for the admonition of the nations, a prophecy so distinct, so strongly marked in all its characteristic features, and yet so consistently united in one grand whole; so definite and precise in the order of the succession of events, and all terminating over and over again in the same everlasting kingdom of the saints and of "THE SON OF MAN."

This name, which our blessed Lord condescended to take in the flesh, and to delight in during his ministry, is revealed in Daniel's prophecy; and it was understood by the Jews, as it is by Christians, to characterise the Messiah, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. And when the Lord preached the kingdom of heaven, he was understood to mean that same, particularly foretold in Daniel, of which, as Son of Man, he was in person the chosen heir, and anointed king. And the great error of the Jews was that same which prevails now, in expecting a temporal state of extraordinary felicity in this world:—and would that the similitude held no further! But truth it is, however fearful, that this felicity is not expected in the world *with Jesus*.—No matter why; the fact is so. The Jews had satisfactory reasons; and so have the Gentiles.

The Jews confidently expected deliverance from the Roman yoke, and in their turn universal dominion; as the church now expects to get the victory over the world, and to have the control of all nations, for the glory of God.

The Jews thought to gain this pre-eminence not without the arm of the Lord, outstretched in their behalf. Likewise the church are now expecting it, not without a manifest display of the divine power, to convert the world.

But the Jews would not have Jesus, the son of David: they preferred Cesar, and even Barabbas. Jesus did not more freely offer himself to them, as the monarch of their expected

kingdom and millennium, than he now offers himself to Christians. But the Jews excused themselves: and so do the Gentiles. The Jews had a satisfactory reason in the meanness of his circumstances. The Christians find their apology in the height of his exaltation. So, from the antipodes of argument, they come to the same fearful conclusion. Christendom, as certainly looks for a millennium in this world, without the living presence of the Lord Jesus, as the Jews did, after they had procured his crucifixion. But disappointment came on the city of Jerusalem; and it must come over Christendom. They of old lost their millennium: and it must ever be so with those who expect great felicity in this world. Jesus gives his people no promise of felicity in this world. They should not look for it here, while he is in heaven: nor should they look for it to come here, except he bring it with him from heaven. The order of the time is revealed in Daniel, and also the manner: and not by Daniel only; but by himself in person, and by all the prophets and the gospel of his coming again, in a time the world think not; but think a long season of "peace and safety."

Horne says: "Of all the old prophets, Daniel is the most distinct in the order of time, and easiest to be understood; and on this account Sir Isaac Newton observes, in those events which concern the last times, he must be the interpreter of the rest. All his predictions relate to each other, as if they were several parts of one general prophecy. The first is the easiest to be understood, and every succeeding prophecy adds something to the former." (Horne's Introduction. Vol. 4. p. 193.)

THE PROPHETIC IMAGE OF DIFFERENT METALS.

Possibly you will believe the poets. In heathen Greece, and pagan Rome, they looked forward with hope to a better and happier condition of things on earth, in which righteousness, peace, and the humane arts will flourish; and evil in all its forms will be forever cast out. But only the word of God presents this hope in a form tangible, clear, and consistent; and marks the order of its accomplishment; and loudly proclaims that its day is at hand. The poets of antiquity sang of the golden age, and of the age of silver following, and of the brazen age, and of the iron age in which we live, and from which the earth is to return, they supposed, to the golden age anew. The Grecian poets, if I recollect right, designate theirs, as the brazen age: the Roman poets certainly mark theirs, as the iron age: but all agree that from the iron a return is had to the golden times.

The Eclogue of Virgil, addressed to Pollio, is so remarkably adapted in time and character to the birth and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, that no reader can fail to be struck with the singular felicity of many of its lines.

It begins:

Sicelides Musae, paulo majora canamus.
Ultima cumaei venit jam carminis aetas:
Magnus ab integro seclorum nascitur ordo.
Jam redit et Virgo; redeunt Saturnia regna:
Jam nova progenies coelo demittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo.
Casta fave Lucina: tuus jam regnat Apollo.

I prefer the translation of Davidson, as follows:

Sicilian Muses, let us sing in yet higher strains.
The last era of prophecy * is come.

* Cumae gave its own name to one of the Sibyls, or Roman prophetesses.

The great series of ages begins anew.
Both the Virgin, † and the Saturnian times return,
A new race from high heaven comes down.
Be kind to the babe, by whom the iron generation first
Shall end, and the golden generation arise all over the world,
O, chaste Lucina; thy own Apollo reigns.

This is wonderful. Stript of the pagan garniture, it is holy prophecy. But Daniel, with more than poetic inspiration, unfolded these things, through the dream of the Assyrian king, and manifested the hidden mysteries of the future, in the explanation of the image:

"Whose brightness was excellent and the form thereof terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, *that were of iron and clay*, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces *together*, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them; and the stone, that smote the image, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream;" and the interpretation of it follows.

The image is one and entire. It presents in one view the dominions, that should rule the world to the end of time. The image is composed of four different metals; until, in the feet of it, clay is introduced, and mixed with the iron.—The stone smites the image in the feet of iron and clay, and breaks them to pieces, and at the same time together with

† Astraea, the fabled Goddess of justice, reigned in the golden age, as did also Saturn. The wickedness of men compelled her to flee from earth to heaven, whence she returns to administer justice in the return of the golden age.

them the whole image also in all its parts, even to powder, "that no place was found for them:" and the stone fills "the whole earth."

The interpretation is given by the prophet, and is not to be mistaken: for he directly applies the head of gold to the Assyrian Monarch, to whom he expounded the dream: and he plainly tells him, that another, a silver kingdom, after him should arise, inferior to his own; and another, a third kingdom of brass, which should bear rule over all the earth.

No difference of opinion scarcely exists, in relation to the kingdoms designated by the silver and brass: for it is perfectly well known, that when the Assyrian of gold lost the empire, Cyrus, the Persian, with Darius the Mede, gained it; and must of necessity answer to the silver breast and arms of the image. And, again, their empire yielded to the arms of Alexander of Greece, commonly called the Great, who first among men is accounted the conqueror of the world: as Daniel predicted two hundred years before his empire bore rule over the whole earth. Not the order of succession only, but this word, "which shall bare rule over the whole earth," fixes the prophecy of the third and brazen kingdom, upon Greece, beyond any possibility of a mistake, through the Macedonian Alexander.

And if some think this is not the Lord's manner, to unvail the order of succession in this world's empires merely: I reply, that the situation of Daniel as prime minister of Assyria; and also the object of the revelation itself, being to introduce to the knowledge of man, the purpose of the Most High, to supplant, in his times, the kingdoms of this world by establishing his own everlasting dominion: it is not strange, that he should have for this once revealed the fate of empires, distinct from the attendant state of his church and people; but directly leading to the fulfilment of all the promises, in the dispensations of the fulness of times, and the kingdom of heaven.—And, whether it appear well and consistent or not

in our eyes, the Lord declares in his word, that these metals of the image mean a series of kingdoms in the world, of which the Assyrian, a merely temporal and hea hen kingdom, was the first; and like that at the head may the rest of the series properly be, temporal and worldly kingdoms, not difficult to be sought out; until we come to the last, which is of entirely another character; and IMMANUEL its eternal king.

The third kingdom of the series is the first to have universal dominion; and that was Macedonian Greece. The fourth kingdom was of iron, and it subdued all that were before it, as iron is stronger than the other metals. And Rome was strong as Iron. She subdued Greece, and Persia, and Assyria, and ruled the known world with irresistible sway. Her dominion is the last of the series of this world. In the end of her dominion begins a new series of eternal ages, but of one kingdom; whose monarch is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and whose subjects, the restored Jews, brought back in the resurrection of the dead, to the heavenly Canaan, with Adam, Noah, Evarts, Brainerd.

While the three former were each of one metal; the fourth in the image was of iron only to the feet, but the feet and toes were part of potter's clay, and part of iron; and the kingdom was divided into ten kingdoms, in the toes of this image, which were composed of iron and clay: and the kingdoms were partly strong and partly broken; because the materials of which they were constituted, will not cleave one to another, though they mingle together, even as iron welds not with clay, nor will clay blend into a compound with iron.

"And in the days of these kings, (the *ten* last mentioned,) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms; and it shall stand forever:" that is, the heavenly kingdom of which the Messiah preached the glad tidings. That is Daniel 2: 44.

Nothing can be plainer, than that the Roman dominion is the iron of that image, whose head was Assyrian gold; and that the Roman is changed in its iron constitution, by the intermixture of a new principle of administration, which runs through the last stage of the empire to its division into ten; and continues throughout the ten kingdoms to the end; when the STONE smites the image in its feet and toes of iron and clay, and breaks in pieces not only these, but together with the iron and clay, also the brass, the silver, and the gold, so that there is no more place found for them: and itself becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth.

Therefore, the fourth empire is peculiar in its series, and unlike the others in two important particulars:

It undergoes a thorough and lasting modification of its nature, or constitution. And, also,

It is divided, in this modified state, into ten kingdoms.

THE TEN KINGDOMS. AND THE IRON AND CLAY.

The commentators of most note, that have come within my humble sphere of observation, agree that the division of the image into ten dominions, is the emblem of that simultaneous breaking up of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, and forming of it into the nations which were commonly known in the early part of their history, as "*the ten kingdoms*," and which constitute, in the main, the nations of modern Europe. —The ten horns of the fourth beast in Daniel's prophecy, correspond to the toes of this image; and the same kingdoms are believed to be designated by the different symbols, the toes and the horns: in our view—growing conjointly out of the empire, as the toes out of the feet of the image; in another view, growing conjointly out of the empire, as ten horns out of the head of one monstrous beast: growing out of the

feet of the image in the order of time ; and out of the head of the beast in respect to their dignity and importance : but both delineating the dismemberment of the empire ; and yet its continuation in the lines of several kings and kingdoms, governed by the same civil law and national law, by the same military institutions, and religious institutions, and civil institutions, and using the same written language, and learned language, one with another and all of Rome, the head of the beast, and the feet of the image.

Men differ in regard to the names of the ten kingdoms : but no matter. The fourth dominion was to be dismembered into ten simultaneous and concurrent powers, according to the word of the Lord, spoken by Daniel the prophet ; and Rome is that fourth empire, and was divided in the fourth century so as to make that number good : and they continue for the most part, to this day with a singular dependence on Rome througout all their borders, and throughout the whole period of their history, in their social and religious, and even in their political arrangements. Therefore, I think the commentators are perfectly right in viewing the modern nations of Europe as the Roman empire in its divided state : in the end of which is the kingdom of heaven.

This is the solution of the peculiarity of the fourth empire, in respect to its continuation in a dismembered condition, divided into ten kingdoms. The other peculiarity is the elder of the two. The modification of the constitution of the empire occurred in the feet ; before the dismemberment took place. To determine what that may be, I cast in my mind the history of Rome, and consider what constitutional change occurred in the empire, in the latter period of its integral form, which has come down through all time, in the ten kingdoms. I perceive that Rome had an iron constitution from the days of Romulus, not changed by the expulsion of the Tarquins, not changed by the elevation of the Cesars, nor quite lost and forgotten by the Christian Emperors, by the

Popes, and the kings of the earth. But in the days of Constantine, in the feet of the image, a hundred or more years before its dismemberment, a modification of the constitution of the empire was effected, by which the Christian church was brought into union with the iron constitution of the empire, forming a union of church and state, of the clerical and imperial power, and of the civil with the ecclesiastical courts, which union continued in the empire, until that was divided; and which has come down through all the ten kingdoms to this day; and which was never so accurately delineated, I think, by poet or by historian, by lawyer or by philosopher or by politician, as by Daniel the prophet, who says: The kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron; forasmuch as thou sawest the iron, mixed with miry clay:—so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken: and they shall mingle themselves, but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

And so with church and state: though joined together in harmony, they agree not between themselves. Mingled in the same government, they do not mix with each other, nor do they cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. Take, for example, the bench of bishops in the English House of Lords; whose intelligence, experience, and Christian excellence, are cheerfully admitted. They form an integral and material part of the government. They are distinct from the Lords temporal, though joined in the same body with them: they are less sought after for all purposes of aggrandisement and favor: though they take precedence as Lords spiritual. In family, in feeling, in education, in occupation, and in the great field of expectation, they neither cohere nor unite, although they mingle together, in one honorable body.

While this is evident in a case so prominent, and above the reach of common prejudices; it is ten-fold more evident in

the ordinary course of this world's affairs, wherever the clergy are called to take any share in the administration of the government.

Nothing among the metals could better represent Roman firmness, than iron. This constitution of the empire continued unqualified by any admixture, until the last period of its existence in an integral form, as the prophet foretold. The iron of the image extended from the thighs to the feet, where it received the addition of the clay to its constitution. And I can think of no change in the iron constitution of the empire during the last stage of its integral form, which can well be likened to the mixing of clay with the iron in one constituent body, except it be the introduction of Christianity into the throne, into the bench of justice, and into the general administration of the government. And except this remarkable change, what other was made in the empire, in its integral form, which can be readily distinguished, as clay from iron, in all the history of the ten kingdoms, which are the fractional parts of that empire? I know not of any other, besides the union of church and state; to maintain the authority of the king by the sanctity of the church; and to maintain the church establishment, by the royal munificence.

This new mode of government began under Constantine, and has, from that time, prevailed in all the kingdoms of modern Europe to this day: and it would seem destined to continue, to the end of time: for the kingdoms are found in this mixed constitution of government, when the stone smites them to powder, together with all that went before them, and itself fills all things.

Besides, as the iron of the image perfectly illustrates the genius and spirit of imperial Rome, and of the unbending temper of her royal power: so is clay a perfect symbol of the Christian admixture. Nothing can more happily contrast the humble and gentle spirit of the gospel, with the proud and hard spirit of the world; the law of love even to ene-

mies, with the law of honorable revenge even upon friends; the ceremonies, the stately forms of high life, with the simplicity of a lowly Christian; and that, in fine, contrasts so perfectly the manners and customs of courtiers, with the habits of apostles, as miry clay mixed with that iron of the royal image.

Considerations of this nature persuade me, that while the iron of the image was the old constitution of the Roman empire, Christianity is the clay admixture.

And from out of a composition in this kind, generous souls are expecting to spring much of the "peace and safety," and carnal security of the temporal millennium!

THE STONE.

"In the sun, and moon, and stars,
"Signs and wonders there shall be;
"Earth shall quake with inward wars,
"Nations with perplexity.

"But though from Jehovah's face,
"Heaven shall fade, and earth shall fly,
"Fear not ye, his chosen race,
"Your redemption draweth nigh."

Having examined the division of the feet of the image, and the intermixture of the miry clay with its iron constitution, in the feet and toes, I shall take for the unanimous consent of my readers, that the remaining symbol in this prophecy, intends our Lord Jesus Christ in person, or by his institutions, or both. The Holy Spirit calls him in person, a stone; the chief corner stone, the stone of stumbling and rock of offence,—the Rock of Ages, and other similar epithets. I take the stone in this prophecy, to be the Lord Jesus in person, and not another by any form of construction.

and I think he refers to this when he says: "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." (Mat. 21: 44.)

Now, mark the bearings of this Stone, and the time of its coming, and the form of its action, and the effects of its contusion on the entire image. Suppose we are standing with Daniel before the Assyrian monarch, time being rolled back on his wheels twenty-four hundred years. We have heard the dream and the interpretation; but we would more fully understand it: and we ask the prophet,

"How much of this image is now above the horizon of time?"

"The golden head," he replies. And we ask again:

"Do the kingdoms which succeed this, follow each other, as the different parts of the image come one after another above the horizon of time, until the kingdom of heaven comes?"

"As the breast and arms of the image come after the golden head," he replies; "so do the Medes and Persians, succeed the Assyrians; and the brazen Greeks succeed to the empire of the Medo-Persians, and the iron Romans succeed to the empire of the Greeks: and to the divided empire of the Romans succeeds the kingdom of heaven, which shall stand for ever."

"But how does the kingdom of heaven come, with manner and eternity, so unlike the rest?"

"Those which precede it are metals of earth, which increase in hardness, until the clay mixes in the last one; and they rise up and enter into each other's kingdom, as they respectively take the dominion. But not so the kingdom of heaven. That comes down from above, and enters not into the kingdom of the others; but it scatters them to oblivion, at a blow, in the person of the king Messiah, who will reign over the house of Jacob forever."—We ask, trembling:

"But who will be his subjects, when the nations are all sent to oblivion and the grave, at the onset of his coming?"

In reply, Daniel reasons with us a moment, thus: "You perceive that Messiah's kingdom stands forever: and when it *fills the whole earth*, it makes all things new. It is the eternal state, which flesh and blood cannot inherit. Therefore, the nations of this world cannot inherit it. But the armies of the dead shall rise, and Messiah shall rule over all, in a body suited to the eternal state. Thus, his subjects will infinitely outnumber the population of the nations of the earth."

We acknowledge it; and yet we desire to know more about this fourth kingdom, whose feet and toes are of iron and clay, and are divided into ten kingdoms.

Daniel might reply: This kingdom well merits your study, for you will live on the earth in its time. It will be much stronger, and more enduring, than all which preceded it. Nevertheless, as the others gave place to it; so must it yield to the never-ending dominion of the Son of Man.

The commentators teach, that in the advent of his humility, when he came to suffer and die, the Lord smote the image of nations. But not only is the anachronism prodigious, which makes the blow of the Stone felt in the feet and toes, before either the feet were formed, or the toes of it divided: the inconsistency in the character is, also, no less apparent and forbidding.

The Lord came in the days of the iron empire of the image, before any thing answering to the clay was mixed with it; before the feet were formed, and before the empire was divided; and he came as a servant, to minister to men, and not to rule over them; and especially to warn them of his coming again to judge the earth in righteousness. In his coming, he neither broke the bruised reed, nor quenched the smoking flax, nor let his authoritative voice be heard in the streets; but much less did he break the iron empires of this

world, and scatter them to the winds. He gave a law that, after three hundred years, was received, like miry clay, among the iron kingdoms of christendom, into their constitution. But his manner and doctrine, at that coming, were as totally unlike the coming of the Stone out of the mountain as can possibly be conceived. Far was it from him at that time, to break in pieces the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, or the kingdoms of this world; but he warned them of a time coming, when he will bring forth judgment unto victory, with a voice of the archangel, which will raise the dead, and with a flaming fire that will devour the adversaries; when the kingdoms of this world pass away forever.

Our day is that of the clay and iron constitution of the feet of the image, which remain unbroken, though divided into many kingdoms that remain unchanged, though their time is wonderfully prolonged; and which are to remain, until the end of time, and the coming of the everlasting kingdom.

The stone from the nature of the symbol, must aim from on high its blow, and not repeat it. It comes from the cloud covered mountain, taken out without hands: and who can withstand the force of its descent? "It smote the image upon his feet of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces:" and it smote them not again; for that one blow was sufficient to break not the feet alone; but "then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces TOGETHER." Such was the force of the blow upon the feet and toes, that it brought the entire image to the ground, in a state, not of fragments, but of *powder;* insomuch that the gold, which is the heaviest of metals, became, with all other parts of the image, "like the chaff of the summer threshing floor; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them. And the stone, that smote the

image, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Certainly, the feet of this image are not broken. They remain in the divided formation, as they were from the beginning of the ten kingdoms; only stronger. And the kingdoms of brass and silver and gold are not broken. They remain as well, as in the days of the gospel first preached. They are far from being broken to pieces together, and blown, where they can no more be found. But this is the manner of their passing away, according to Daniel the prophet; which proves that the action of the stone is yet to come.

"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom."

This is generally interpreted of the first advent; but erroneously: for that was in the days not of any concurrent or consecutive *kingdoms*, but in the iron age of the fourth kingdom only. The kingdom which should come from heaven, therefore, "in the days of these kings," must come, in the time of the ten concurrent kingdoms, into which the fourth is divided, and in the time of the thrones, which now govern the earth.

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE PROPHETIC IMAGE.

From the time of Daniel to the end of time, were to be four empires; then should come the everlasting kingdom, which is the same with the kingdom of heaven. As the first empire was followed by the second, and the second by the third, and the third by the fourth, which is now on the stage of this world, in the last formation of iron and clay; and in the last division, into ten kingdoms: so also will the fourth, and all that have preceded it, give place to the kingdom of our God, which the Lord will bring with him at his coming.

And the ordinary explanation of the prophecy of these kingdoms, which makes the clash of the stone upon the image, no blow at all, but a gentle abrasion and wearing away of the image, in which it is impossible to tell, with all reverence, and burning shame, which gets the most rubbed, the STONE, or the *iron*;—the interpretation, which makes the blow in the iron legs of the image, instead of the iron and clay feet; and the common interpretation, which allows the image to stand strong yet eighteen hundred years after it was smitten; and which expects it still to remain firm on its feet, a good thousand years, while all its heterogeneous materials are moulded and leavened into one heavenly and uniform substance; contrary to that word of the prophet, which declares, that all shall be blown away utterly, so that no place shall be found for them: this commonly received interpretation is by no means formed out of the study of the prophet Daniel; but it is evidently the interpretation necessary to sustain the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven already come.

Men lost their patience in waiting for the promised kingdom, and they became willing to accept of the use of Origen's ladder, to reach it. Having from age to age to the full end of ten centuries, wearied themselves with looking for it, and deceived themselves grossly with the calculation of the precise time of its coming; they began in the full end of ten centuries generally to conclude, that somehow it had come already; and they searched the scriptures to substantiate a doctrine which they had learned of their own impatience, and not of the word of God. And from them we have received it.

THE FOUR BEASTS OF THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL.

If any shadow of doubt could remain, as to the name, and to the successive order of the four empires, symbolised in the image, and as to their utter destruction at the coming of the last and heavenly kingdom, it will clear away, on examining the prophecy of the same things, under the symbol of four beasts, followed by the kingdom of the saints, related in the seventh chapter of Daniel. And here I will notice the period of time allotted in chronoligical order to the empires which have passed; and to the different phases of the fourth, under whose sway we live.

The Babylonian power yielded to the arms of Cyrus in the year 538 before Christ. This terminated the reign of the LION, and golden head of the image, after 209 years, from Nabonassar to Belteshazzar.

The Medo-Persian BEAR, which is the silver breast and arms of the image, continued from Cyrus to Alexander the Great, a period of 207 years. And that you are not called upon to believe fables, the school boys may know; for they know the name of Alexander the Great; and that he is the first, who ruled all nations; as Daniel foretold 200 years before Alexander's reign.

The Macedonian LEOPARD, which is the brass of the image, had four heads given it. That of Greece proper fell before Paulus Emilius, B. C. 167, in the kingdom of Macedon, and before Mummius, in the Achean League, B. C. 146. Pompey reduced another head to the obedience of Rome in the subjugation of Mithridates, making his kingdom a Roman province, from the Euxine to the Euphrates, and also Syria, from Egypt to Persia, B. C. 70 to 63. The Egyptian head was last reduced to a province by Augustus Cesar: B. C. 30. Some authors count the years of the Leopard from Alexander to the capture of Corinth; others from Al-

exander to the subjugation of Egypt to be a province of Rome, terminating the empire of Egypt. This last date gives the Leopard a period of 300 years from the conquest of Persia by Alexander, B. C. 330, to the reduction of Egypt B. C. 30. The battle of Actium B. C. 31. I follow Tytler, in dates.

Then, the indescribable dominion of Rome took imperial form, and ruled all nations. This is the iron of the image, and the fourth of the beasts: fierce, powerful, and peculiar.

It was "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth: and it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts before it, and it had ten horns." (Dan. 7: 7.)

This is the iron of the image, and the iron and clay; and the ten horns accord with the ten toes. Under the dominion of this imperial power had the world been sixty years, when the Lord Jesus Christ began to preach the coming of the next kingdom: exhorting all men to bethink themselves and prepare, for the everlasting kingdom of Messiah had already come near: "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

From the beginning of the fourth empire, under Augustus Cesar, to the era of Constantine, is the length of the iron legs of the image, a period of 350 years: reckoning to the period when Constantine overthrew Licinius, and established himself sole emperor, with important changes in the administration of the government, giving temporal power to spiritual guides, A. D. 320.

From this admixture of the miry clay with the iron, in the feet of the image, to their division into toes, was about 150 years: the final dissolution of the empire having occurred A. D. 476. But the dismemberment was taking effect, in some parts of the Eastern empire 100 years earlier: and 50 to 75 years earlier in the West. It was 507 years from

the battle of Actium to the extinction of the Western empire: which was the consummation of the dismemberment of the empire.

Now the horns proceeded from the head of the beast, and the toes from the feet of the image: and it is apparent, that, to the existing form of the fourth empire, a surprising duration has been allotted already; for "*the days of these kings*" number 1362 years at this moment: a startling sum, when we consider how this fourth empire is to terminate.

THE TEN HORNS.

Horns are the last features formed on the head of a beast; and these ten are the last form of the fourth and existing empire. The number is monstrous, and so is the beast from whose head they come. Their state is not uniform from first to last; they had a beginning, and will come with the world to an end. Daniel notices this peculiar one among them:

"I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and behold, in the horn were eyes, like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit—his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. The judgment was set, and the books were opened." (Dan. 7: 8, 9, 10.)

I shall barely state the impression this makes on my own mind. Daniel, having seen the beast, and at length the ten horns, is contemplating them with marked attention, when he observes the eleventh pushing up among them, before which three of the ten fell out by the roots, (this leaves the whole number eight.) This last horn is a wonder,

"Behold, in this horn were eyes, like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down." Daniel seems to gaze with wonder on this last horn, till the day of judgment.

No man can fail, I think, to perceive the order of events, although the wisest cannot fix the time, allotted to the future event in its order. The four empires have successively followed each other, and the fourth is to be followed by the day of judgment, and the endless reign of Messiah.

This is the order of events; and only the last and endless kingdom remains to come, to complete the series; whether followed in the line of the metallic image, or of the four beasts.

But we are not left to the general order alone, for our guidance. Under the figure of the horns of the fourth empire, certain events are set forth, not to be mistaken in the annals of this empire, which are plainly accomplished down to the very last; and yet we are slow to understand that the last will come, as all the rest have come, in the order foretold; but we are prompt and eager to look for a temporal and carnal millennium of spiritual felicity, amidst the good things in abundance of "this present evil world." Therefore, "when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18: 8.)

The changes of the fourth and existing empire are represented to the prophet by various symbols. The admixture of the clay and iron in the feet of the image, symbolizes the union of church and state: and the division into ten kingdoms, is signified by the ten horns: and the supplanting horn, which rises after the others, is known by its eyes, which search the hearts of all its subjects, as well as by its mouth, which speaks for the Most High.

No horn of power, or dominion of earth, ever attempted to speak with the mouth, or to search all hearts with the eyes of the Son of Man, save only one, which arose after the ten,

and yet among them. It is not agreed who were the three, that were pushed out of the head by the roots, at the coming of the little one; but it is perfectly well known who of all the crowned heads of the divided empire and civilized world, wears a triple tiara; and I take his three towering crowns to be evidence against the wearer, that he is that one of the eight, who took away the place of three: for no other of these monarchs wears but a single crown. And it is the same horn which has eyes and a mouth and the triple crown, and which arose after the ten.

Daniel was troubled with the vision, and we may well be also: not with its application, for that is easy; but with the astonishing exhibition of human depravity, which it presents, in the last form of the fourth empire. It was told Daniel in the way of explanation:

"These four beasts are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth; but the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."

I have before spoken of the technical use of words in every profession, when I took occasion to explain the use of the word "*day*" in the prophets. By a peculiarity of their own, they use "king" for *kingdom*, with all freedom, as in this quotation. The prophet is told for his comfort, in view of the fearful beasts before him, that they are four earthly monarchies, which will all pass away in time: but the saints shall take an endless dominion.

How can it be endless, if it be in the flesh? It must be the kingdom of the risen dead, of which Messiah is the "appointed heir;" "expecting till his enemies be made his footstool;" and whose kingdom must shortly come, by the word of Revelation, according to the prophet Daniel, and according to the prophet John, in the Apocalypse, and according to the preached gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every minister

of the gospel preaches it so, with conscious power, when mingled with holy love.

"See the Eternal Judge descending,
"View him seated on the throne!
"Now, poor sinner, now lamenting,
"Stand, and hear thy awful doom:
"Trumpets call thee;
"Stand and hear thy awful doom."

This is an old and familiar doctrine, sometimes well understood, and almost universally received. My desire is, to hold it in perfect simplicity, and to hold it directly in view; preaching and believing, as the Lord said: "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" without a long purgatory between, on the one hand, or a millennium of carnal security between, on the other hand; and denying that it came eighteen hundred years ago. Either of these doctrines plainly conflicts with the tenor of the word of God, and makes confusion with the simplicity, and greatly detracts from the power, of the doctrine of Christ, taught in that form of sound words, in which, as a beautiful casket, he inclosed "*the faith once*" for all time "*delivered to*" his apostles, "*the saints.*"

Some men are afraid of this doctrine; it takes so powerful hold on the mind. They can hear common preaching, and believe it all unmoved, and sit half a century under it, unconverted. They do often sit under the common sound of the gospel, with hearts of stone, while time whitens their head, and they become fairly covered with the moss of indifference. But this doctrine comes to them, clothed in such terrors of heavenly majesty, that it agitates them who hear it, and drives them from their seat of repose in the congregation, or from a dead faith. They must be upon their feet in view of it. They must deny its truth, and resist it; they must hear it with scorn, and treat it with any thing but in-

difference, or it will work in them; until they are ready to cry out with the three thousand: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" It is a doctrine of unequalled power, which must be either forgotten, or treated with direct hostility, or else it will convert the hearers, and make them serve God, in spirit and in truth, who have all their life time served the world, and the flesh, not considering much about the end of all things, and the coming of the Lord.

It is a doctrine also calculated to disturb them that are at ease in Zion, who have much goods laid up in store for many years; who are worldly minded, rich, and have need of nothing. It is poison to them: they *cannot* take it: and, sure, I would not offer it to them, except in the faith, that the death of this world is the only way to the life of the world to come.

But the suffering millions of wretched mortals, the poor to whom this *gospel* always was, and will be, *glad tidings;* they will hear it with joy: and when they see what things have already come to pass, they will "know that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." "Then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21: 28, 31.)

And it is a doctrine, like purifying fire, able to consume, and wholly to destroy the walls of separation between brethren, which our Babylon has built; and also to burn up those paltry thorns of dissension, which now rankle in many bosoms, both in civil, and in social, and in religious relations of close intercourse in life; and which thorns anger them one with another, and cause them to offend against both God and man, in whosesoever bosoms they are planted. Yet, how difficult, how utterly impossible, by any ordinary means, even of gospel grace, to pluck up and destroy such roots of bitterness in the paths of life; and to reconcile discordant brethren!

The Lord be praised, that, amidst the many discoveries of this inventive age, one is made of a doctrine from heaven, strong enough to contend successfully with this world and its circean cup; and to uncover the syren plots, and wily schemes of the adversary; and strong enough to make men of this apostate age, Christians of the stamp of primitive ages, when they came forth from paganism at the birth, armed at all points, and instructed in the knowledge of the use of the Christian armor, not unlike the fabled goddess of wisdom, under the hand of Vulcan, from the head of Jupiter, whose agile leap, and shield, and quivering spear, bespoke her heavenly origin, and attracted no little surprise and admiration, even among the gods, and inhabitants of the celestial city. The difficulty is at this day, to get attention to the holy word; to withdraw people from the attractive pursuits of gain, of politics, and of fleeting pleasure. "Every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure, things new and old:" (Mat. 13: 52,) and never did an age call on the householder for new things with the old, as does this age; and this doctrine of the kingdom of heaven at hand, supplies his need exactly, that he may furnish to every one a word in season: and those who are discerning, will not fear to bring it forth; for it is from the Lord, legibly written in his word.

From this humble episode, I return to the book of Daniel, anxious with the prophet to learn still more about the fourth empire, in whose day we live.

THE LITTLE HORN.

"He comes, he comes, the judge severe,
"The seventh trumpet speaks him near!
"The lightnings flash, the thunders roll,
"He's welcome to the faithful soul."

"Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell: even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them: UNTIL the Ancient of days *came*, and *judgment* was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the *kingdom*." (Dan. 7: 19 to 23.)

No words can make plainer the order of events in the succession of changes under the fourth empire to the end of the world, and to the day of judgment than this language of the prophet: and this is the third time, in the same vision of the beasts, that he has enumerated that order: once in the first 14 verses; again from the 14th to the 19th, and now from the 19th to the 23d. The little kingdom with the stout look, be it which, or be it whatsoever it may, "*made war with the saints and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came*," and with him the judgment.

No room is here for the millennium, until after the Ancient of days comes to judgment; until after the little horn ceases to make war with the saints, and to prevail; until the stone from on high smites the image in the feet and toes of it, and destroys it altogether, so that no more place is found for any particle of it. This dispensation under which we

live, is that of the tribulation of the saints, in which the enemy overcomes them, and slays them with all manner of persecution. This is not the kingdom of heaven: this is the kingdom of the fourth beast and of his last horn; which is "the man of sin, and son of perdition,"—"that wicked, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his *coming*." (2 Thess. 18: 8.) This is the coming of the ancient of days: and his work is the same according to Daniel, to Paul, and to John. "Babylon shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." (Rev. 18: 8.)

The prophets have not agreed together to mock us: they have not joined hands to represent the coming of the Ancient of days, the Son of man, in flames, to destroy and utterly to burn this Babylon, this man of sin, this proud spoken kingdom that makes war with the saints, and prevails against them, until the judgment, except this is of a truth the purpose of God, to come suddenly upon the world, as in the days of Noah; and to destroy it with consuming fire, as of old with cleansing water. Peter, and Isaiah, and Malachi, and all the prophets from the beginning, speak of these things, in no blind terms. Daniel and Paul and John mark the order of the empires, and the succession of kingdoms and of great events, down to the very period of the Lord's coming and his kingdom: for I cannot help understanding the word of Paul in the above extract: "whom the Lord shall consume with *the spirit of his mouth*," as referring to the effects of the publication of the Scriptures in the modern languages, to waste the body of the son of perdition with slow and sure consumption. And all readers admit, that the angel of the gospel is pleading with the nations at this moment, in the words of (Rev. 14: 7.) "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the *hour of his judgment is come*."—And immediately follows another saying: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen;" the manner of whose end is not concealed in *the prophets*.

"But do you understand all these things?"

Let the reader judge. For my own part, I rely not on man's understanding; but only on the word of God. And, though it be, like its author, incomprehensible, it is like him also, accurate and true. He ordained the stars that are fixed; and he gave unto the seas their bounds; and he gave to the planets and moons their times, and their courses, so accurately adjusted, that unbelieving men may calculate with perfect precision the eclipses of the sun, and of the moon; and even the eclipses of Jupiter's moons, determining their times to a second, and the precise points they may occupy in their immense orbits, for years to come, at any moment of the year. The movements of these heavenly bodies are apparently involved, and contrary one to another; and for a long time the learned astronomers were troubled to explain them; because they would have this world for the centre of their system. But, when they learned to consider the sun, as the centre, all the motions of the planets, and changes of the seasons, and phases of the heavens, came to be regarded as perfect in beautiful order and harmony, as they were before obscure and self-contradictory. I have a hope that the discovery, which takes the word of the Lord Jesus, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," for the nucleus and centre of the scheme of prophecy, will, at length, bring every thing in the prophets to that manifest harmony and order, which characterises all the works of the great Creator, and exists also in his word, notwithstanding the short sight of a carnal generation is incapable of discerning it, in this iron and clay compounded age.

But, whatever obscurity covers the prophetic page of scripture generally, very little truth of any sort is set out, not the evening and the morning star itself more clearly, than the order of empires, and the changes of the last in this world, are set out in the book of Daniel, from his day to the end of time; and, that we should not mistake in a matter of so great

interest, one also, on which the god of this world is so busy to blind the eyes of the faithful, let us go once again with Daniel, under the tuition of the angel, now the fourth time over the series, in this same vision of the four beasts, beginning at the twenty third verse of the seventh chapter. For Daniel also inquired more particularly about the fourth empire; and this is the angel's reply.

"Thus he said: the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are the ten kings that shall arise; and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings: and he shall speak great words against the Most High, and *shall wear out the saints* of the Most High; and think to change times and laws: and *they shall be given into his hand*, until a time and times, and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and *they shall take away his dominion*, to consume and destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom, *under the whole heaven*, shall be given to *the people of the saints* of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey *him*." (Dan. 7: 23 to 28.)

It is affectation to disbelieve the prophet, who so accurately delineated twenty-four hundred years ago, the changes of empires, and the rise of nations, and even the character of the Roman dominion, diverse from all others, and the history of its changes, and the manners of the Pope, and his triumphs over the faith in *wearing out* the saints, and overcoming them: until *the kingdom under the whole heaven* shall be given to the Messiah and his people, for an everlasting dominion. Now the fourth time the prophet traces the chain of events, with only such variations as heighten the interest, without varying in the smallest degree the result, which ends

uniformly in the kingdom of the saints and of heaven. Whatever may be the length of his period, mystically signified in this quotation, there is no mystery in respect to *the ending* of it in the end of this world, and in the day of judgment, and in the saints taking everlasting dominion, *under the whole heaven*. This is all plain enough.

Be the Little Horn who or what it may, that power is contrary to the saints, and prevails over them to the very last; and be its time long or short, it reigns and domineers, according to the word of God, by Daniel the prophet, until the day of judgment. Therefore, by this chart of time, most accurately delineated for the space of twenty-four hundred years, no space is left open for a passage into a millennial state of this world; much less is there a delineation of such forthcoming bliss. We think that we know this extraordinary horn of power, having both a mouth and eyes; and we believe that its career is about finished, and its course run: and yet our eyes are shut to that coming of the Lord to judgment, which is to be the utmost limits of this world's kingdoms, and the overwhelming catastrophe of this imperial kingdom of a triple crown. We are rather expecting, at least a thousand years of "peace and safety," after the destruction of "that wicked," "in this present evil world." Whereas, Daniel four times over assures us in this vision, and Paul and John agree to the same testimony, that the Lord in righteous judgment coming, cuts off "that wicked;" and, on the utter ruin of the world's kingdoms, establishes the everlasting throne of Messiah, in the new creation of endless glory and bliss. This is the kingdom of heaven, which the gospel proclaims to be at hand.

Therefore, the church, nor the gospel dispensation, is that which Daniel foretold, as the kingdom of the saints: but that is a kingdom yet to come, which the Lord preached at hand.

Thus have I noticed some of the most prominent passages in the Old and New Testaments, commonly quoted, and universally relied on, to sustain the doctrine of the church's being that kingdom, which is proclaimed in the gospel, and foretold in the prophets. From the very cursory examination given them the reader must be satisfied, or it is in vain for me to proceed in the inquiry, that so far from sustaining the common faith on this subject, they absolutely overturn and annihilate it; so that it happens to the error in the mind, under this examination, as it does to the image in the king's dream; it is so perfectly dispelled, that there is no more place found for it; and the greatness of the kingdom, which is to succeed, fills the whole soul and heart and mind of the believer.

Other passages may still give apparent support to the error; but on a faithful examination, I doubt not they will lift up themselves, like a cloud from the earth, under the light of the rising sun; and show the landscape beneath in fresher beauty and loveliness, by the direct beams of truth from the sun of righteousness, sent down through the medium of the written words from his own lips: "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The fourth empire has now stood nearly two thousand years, in full dominion: the glad tidings of the next following have been preached eighteen hundred years. The ten kingdoms have stood in their strength, above thirteen hundred and sixty years. The last, which should come, has flourished above a thousand years, and must flourish according to the word by Daniel, so far as to prevail in power, until the judgment day.—But in the days of these concurrent thrones, will the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, for it is the kingdom of heaven. Our Nobleman has been long gone into the far country to receive it. The Son of man has been nearly two thousand years at the right hand of the Father in heaven, expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool; (Heb. 10:

12.) and can it be wrong to expect him soon coming in the clouds, with power and great glory?—Is it folly to look for him, to come the second time, without sin unto salvation?

"Lo, he comes, with clouds descending,
"Once for favored sinners slain!
"Thousand, thousand saints attending,
"Swell the triumph of his train:
"Hallelujah,
"Jesus comes, and comes to reign!"

Then, by the sacrament of the last supper, "show forth his death, till he comes." Then pray as he taught: "*Thy kingdom come*," in the sense of an old catechism in high repute, which teaches, that in these words we pray, "that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed—and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened." The good Lord hasten it in his time, according to that word: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Bethink yourselves; repent, and believe the glad tidings.

It is written in the last chapter of Revelation: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star. And the spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth, say come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The Holy Spirit, which is the earnest of our inheritance, and the Elijah of the Second Advent, unites with the faithful church, the Bride, to supplicate the Lord to come. All who hear, are exhorted to unite in the supplication; and all who will, are invited to come and take of the water of salvation, that they may be owned of him at his coming: and "He which testifieth these things, saith: "*Surely, I come quickly.*"—"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"Yea, Amen: let all adore thee,
"High on thine eternal throne!
"Savior! take the power and glory,
"Claim the kingdom for thine own.
"O, come quickly—
"Hallelujah, come, Lord, come!"

NATURAL DEATH; AND THE SECOND DEATH.

"O, on that day, that wrathful day,
"When man to judgment wakes from clay,
"Be thou the trembling sinner's stay,
"Though heaven and earth shall pass away."

Daniel has recorded the order of the coming kingdom, in respect to time, fixing it beyond any doubt, in the end of time, and in the eternal state: and he has not concealed the manner of its coming. He plainly represents it, as making a thorough revolution on the face of the whole world, which is explained by the new creation. But Paul is more explicit in respect to the manner of the Lord's coming; and he is not obscure to the discerning mind, in respect to the order of the time.

Let one read the description of that coming in the fourth chapter of 1 Thess., and of that wrath, which devours the wicked as stubble before him, contained in the first chapter of 2 Thess., and consider the terrors of the scene, that they belong to the last great day beyond dispute, and to the coming of the Lord Jesus to awake the dead, and to cut off the ungodly race from the face of the earth; and then observe how near Paul brings it home to *their* heart and time, and to all time; and yet how perfectly indefinite he leaves it. The Bible alone is capable of such infinite precision.

"For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord,

shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For you yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh, as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, PEACE AND SAFETY, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 4: 15 to 5: 5, 23.)

No word of peace and safety was ever invented against the doctrine of the sudden coming of the Son of Man, like this of a full thousand years' millennium yet in the world. It is amazing how it deceives the holy men of all nations, while it intoxicates, with the expected delight, the carnal desire of men, to put far away the evil day; and lulls, into a soothing slumber, the warm and devoted apostles themselves, who little dream of the reverses of the night, even before the dawn of the morning. So Peter and James and John, slept, while the Lord was agonising in the garden of Gethsemane. They had deep convictions of peace and safety, and a hope of the promised kingdom in a very few days. Though charged to watch, they were overcome with the fatigues of the day, and with the darkness of the night, and slept soundly; until the torches of the traitor band aroused them to their danger; as the lightning will, which in the last day, shall destroy the son of perdition, and all the workers of iniquity together.

The same coming again is taught with undiminished splendor in the first chapter of 2 Thessalonians.

"That ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God; (v.5,) when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (because our testimony among you was believed,) in that day." (2 Thess. 1: 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.)

This is preaching the glorious coming of the Son of man: a doctrine of unequalled power, and of tremendous interest, which is in these days transformed into the doctrine of death —coming. O detestable and impious perversion of the holy word. We often hear men urged now-a-days to repent in the certain prospect of death, which no man can tell is how near: and I am sometimes asked the practical difference of this view of the duty of repentance, from that urged upon mankind, because the king in the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And I reply:

Though to our limited view, there should seem to be no difference in the two forms, one is given, and the other is assumed; and it is only safe to follow strictly the Lord's word, and to preach the preaching that he bids, neither more nor less. Abraham might have assumed to think it was all one to the Lord, whether he offered his son Isaac, or a lamb of the flock; and *he could have made a fair show of reason*, for the Lord's preferring a lamb: but that would only have argued him out of the title to his inheritance, as father of the faithful: it could not have proved, that it is safer for a man to choose his own ways, or to prefer his own modes of speech, before those which Jehovah has appointed for him.

The Holy Scriptures in no instance, to my recollection, exhort men to repent, in view of the death of the body. They make no great account of the death of the body. They consider it a sleep only; though the world may laugh their doctrine to scorn: they consider it only a sleep, from which all the dead will awake at the resurrection, to the dread realities of the judgment day. They deeply regard the second death; but not the death of the body. They are full of entreaty to repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh, to judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: but they heed not the death of the body; they would not have men heed that particularly; nor even fear them who can only *kill the body*; but rather him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. The scriptures rejoice in them who "loved not their lives unto the death," (Rev. 12: 11.) and they require us to hate our own life, for Christ's sake, and to surrender the body to the destroyer fearlessly, in the faith of Jesus and the resurrection, which is the kingdom of heaven.

The holy scriptures do not encourage a cowardly spirit, a pusillanimous spirit, and the vulgar fear of death. Bless the Lord, they take away the fear of death, and wipe away the mourner's tear for them who sleep in Jesus. They give the believer assurance, that he shall neither see, nor taste death, in the change of this body to the dust; counting it nothing to be unclothed, in the assurance that he shall be clothed upon, when mortality is swallowed up of life, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. So far from countenancing the base fear of death, the holy scriptures exhort us to "die daily:" (1 Cor. 15: 31.) "as it is written: For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." (Rom. 8: 36.) The holy scriptures teach us to brave death in any form, not even amidst tortures accepting deliverance, to save the life of the

body; but rather refusing deliverance, in the hope of a better resurrection. (Heb. 11 : 35.) A *brave man* despises death, and will face it in the hailstorm of battle, and in the roaring of the elements, with the spirit of an immortal, which extorts universal admiration in a good cause. The Bible teaches every man that he is immortal; and not to count this life dear in a good cause; for the believer shall obtain a glorious resurrection.

Savage and civilized nations, heathen and christians, are universally taught, and are wont, to count not their life dear in the public service, in the salvation of their country, or of their family, or of their bosom friend. Therefore, death itself is not much accounted of among wise men: neither is it by the wisdom and the word of God; and it is the weakness and depravity and folly of man, to pretend to match the doctrine of death at hand, with the doctrine of the near coming of the Son of man, in the work of converting the soul. A man may defy death in the field of false honor, and die as the fool dieth; he may yield to it on a slow approach of consumption, with cold philosophy; he may surrender it on the gallows for crime, with triumph for his wickedness. The fear of it may be thoroughly subdued by the immortal spirit, which is in man, as well as by veteran discipline, and frequent danger: and time and exposure only increase our indifference to it. Every year of our lives, while we know it comes nearer, we naturally fear it less and less and less. It enters our houses, it passes daily by our doors in the city, and we are called to hold its victim in our arms, whose heart not long since beat with love on our own bosom. It is a solemn and tender hour; but we are not accustomed to tremble even at this, not at the *sight* of death, and much less at the thought of it.

But not so is the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom. That is it which makes the mighty men, and the bondmen, and every freeman alike tremble, and fly to hide in the

the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and to call on the mountains and rocks: "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand." (Rev. 6: 16, 17.) They who never quail in battle, who never bend the knee to heaven, who are sheathed in adamantine armor against all temporal calamities, will quail before this doctrine, and prostrate themselves to the earth before the Lord, in view of the great day of his wrath, in which no flesh shall be able to stand; in view of that judgment, which dispenses to every man eternal life, or the second death, according as his work shall be.

Naturally man has little fear of the judgment in natural death. The immortal spirit within him, often rises superior to the fear of natural death, and nobly defies the king of terrors. Yet that same noble spirit in him will tremble in the view of the second death, and quake with conscious infirmity in apprehension of the judgment day. These latter are spiritual things, wholly belonging to the spiritual world; as a friend reminds me; and in order to be received they must be taught, not in words of man's wisdom; but in words of the Holy Ghost, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receives not the spiritual things of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2: 13, 14.) Man will not naturally infer a judgment to come, through any form of preaching natural death, or the death of the body: the whole is rather foolishness to him. He will sit and hear; but he will not believe; and while the preacher urges the death of the body, as a motive to prepare for judgment, the hearer, perhaps, will be naturally inferring universal salvation, as the consequent of natural death: and if I mistake not, this delusion is practically wide spread, on the ground of preaching repentance in view of natural death.

But the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven at hand, in which kingdom this risen body must soon stand before the king on the throne, before Jesus the crucified, and be judged according to the deeds done in this body, whether they be good or bad; and that this body must be received into the inheritance of eternal life, with the holy angels, or be for ever cast out, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; this doctrine will surely stir the spirit which is in man, and will prick his heart, and cause him earnestly to inquire: "What must I do to be saved?"

Therefore, there is infinite spiritual power in the doctrine of Jesus and the kingdom of heaven at hand; and great natural indifference to the doctrine of the death of the body at hand; the latter is smoky darkness; the former is a glowing furnace of fire, that will melt the most stubborn heart.

PAUL'S OPINION.

"Sinners, awake betimes: ye fools, be wise;
"Awake, before this dreadful morning rise:
"Change your vain thoughts, your sinful words amend;
"Fly to the Savior; make the judge your frend;
"Then join the saints, wake every cheerful passion;
"*When Christ returns, he comes for your salvation.*"

The apostles preached this doctrine with power. In the faith of it, they carried the gospel among the nations, so that their sound went even to the ends of the earth. But Paul presented it in the fulness of its glory to the admiring view of the Thessalonians, and also to us: for these things were recorded "for our admonition, *upon whom the ends of the world are come.*" (1 Cor. 10: 11.) And not one jot does the apostle take from the nearness and grandeur of the scene; until he utters the remarkable prophecy of the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians, in which no diminution of the terrors

of the coming king is made; nor to us is permitted any opportunity to expect a thousand years delay of the Lord's coming. It was the following passage, which first opened to my astonished view this doctrine, nearly five years ago. But meeting much opposition to it, and finding little encouragement to speak of it, where I had expected much, I paused in the pursuit, conscious that, if true, it would not injure by delay. In the mean time, domestic anxiety and suffering dried up my spirit, and left me no power to arrange the multitude of thoughts upon this great theme; until now, in the hour of desolation, I thrust them from me with a haste that comports rather with my sense of their intrinsic value, than with respect for the order of their arrangement, or the nice adjustment of their proportions, or the polished texture of their covering. It is only to the magnificence of the thoughts, that I would call the reader's attention; and these are not mine, even in my weakness; they belong to the word of God. It is the overwhelming importance of the doctrine, that engages our meditation, and our study of the scriptures, to learn whether these things are indeed so. We will open to 2d Thessalonians, 2d chapter. It begins:

"Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him; (you perceive how Paul always keeps the great coming of the Lord in view, even when teaching that it is not instant;) that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ *is at hand.*"

The original word here, for "*is at hand,*" is not the same as that our Lord used in preaching the gospel; nor has it the same import by any means; although the word is translated by the same, "*is at hand,*" in English. *Ηγγικε, engike,* was the Lord's word, meaning "*has come nigh,* or *is at hand:*" ενεστηκεν, *enesteken,* is Paul's word here, meaning *has come right upon you,* or directly before you.

It signifies a greater nearness than *engike*. Paul, in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, put the day and coming of the Lord before them in all its terrors, and living nearness: and he opens this second Epistle with a vivid description of the same most solemn scene: and, then, to correct their apprehensions, and to calm their troubled mind, he furnishes them with certain reasons, why they should not see that day instantly, although they should see it at length, and should gather to the Lord at his coming. And, now you, who understand the scriptures, and also something of the history of the church, and of the world, since the days of the apostles, tell me of the several reasons, which Paul gives for quieting the mind of the Thessalonians, what one remains to our time, and to us, to keep our mind from shaking with fear for that the day of Christ is at hand, *enesteken*, and has come right upon us?

"Let no man deceive you," says the apostle, "by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first. [It has come, both wide and terrible, long ago.] And that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. [He has been above a thousand years revealed, the personification of the mystery of iniquity.] Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the *temple* of God, [the church is his temple] showing himself that he is God. [This is the little kingdom of the prophet Daniel, which should make war with the saints, and prevail against them, and wear them out, to the end of time.] Remember ye not, that when I was with you, I told you these things, and now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time."

Paul refers to matters well understood at Thessalonica, and not concealed from the inquirer, even in this new world. He had taught them how the imperial authority, while it survived, would withhold the manifestation of the man of sin.

The emperor would be a continual check on the Pope. But Paul proceeds: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth (hindereth) will let, (or hinder,) until he be taken out of the way." The pride of power in the church is the mystery of iniquity, I think: and that did not only work in Paul's time. The emperor hindered its growth in the Roman empire, while he bore sway; but in the eighth century, he was "taken out of the way." The Roman bishop shook off his yoke, and rebelled against him; and then came to pass that which was written: "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. 2: 8.) The consumption has been three centuries upon him, with the Bible published in the common languages of christendom; and the destruction with the brightness of the Lord's coming only remains.

This interpretation rests for its basis, on the authority of all antiquity, as I will in few words set before the reader.

That Antichrist should come, was the testimony of John in the Epistles; as it is of Paul here respecting the man of sin, and son of perdition. The two personages were taken for the same one, who should come in the last time, corresponding with the time of the octo-eleventh horn of the fourth beast. All antiquity understood this so; and, also, that this sinful power would be destroyed by Christ's coming.

The coming of Antichrist, and of the end of the world, was universally expected in the persecution by the Emperor Severus, A. D. 203. The coming of Antichrist was in the mouths of all. Fifty years after, in the Decian persecution, St. Cyprian is found constantly animating the faithful, to prepare for the coming of Antichrist, "whose impious time begins to approach:" and arming the Christian soldier for the combat, he says: "Antichrist threatens, but Christ defends: *Antichrist comes, but Christ overcomes him.*" And the

Latin Historian, *Baronius*, says (whose history is rich with quotations from the Christian Fathers, and who is competent to testify with clearness on this head,) "It was peculiar to the Holy Fathers, *as those who watched anxiously for the Lord's coming*, on seeing any severe persecution excited against the church, to think *that Antichrist was near, and the advent of Christ, and also the end of the world.* This was believed in the persecutions under Nero, Domitian, Severus, and others, as I have already said, and shall say of others." (Bar. Vol. 2, p. 527.)

So persuaded were the Christians of the primitive ages, that Antichrist was withheld by the heathen emperors, that Tertullian, who flourished A. D. 200 to 220, plainly declares: "We Christians are under a particular necessity of praying for the emperors, and for the preservation of the empire; *because we know that* that dreadful power, which threatens the whole world, is withheld *during the time appointed for the continuance of the Roman empire:*" undivided.

St. Hilary says: "It is time to speak out, for the time to be silent is past. Christ should be expected, *because Antichrist prevails.*" He referred to the reign of Constantius, the Arian son of Constantine. (*Bar.* A. D. 356 to 360.) I quote it to show how intimately connected in the mind of the Fathers, was the coming of Antichrist, in the end of the world, and the coming of Christ to destroy him, according to these words of Paul to the Thessalonians. *Basil* writes to the church of Alexandria, some twenty years later, (*Bar.* A. D. 372, Sec. 101,) "But we expect the revelation from heaven, and the appearing of the Great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

And *Saint Jerome*, having heard of the capture of Rome by Alaric, wrote as follows, in allusion to the prevalent opinion in the primitive ages, that the imperial power was that which withheld the revelation of the man of sin: "*He*

who hindered, is taken out of the way, and we consider not that Antichrist is at hand."

How much more are we blinded, who have seen, not only him that withheld, taken out of the way; but Antichrist long ago revealed; and yet we consider not that the day of Christ is at hand!

Lactantius, the preceptor of Constantine's heir, in the seventh book of his Institutes, treats of the coming of Antichrist, and of the day of judgment. He considers these two events, as Daniel and Paul evidently with John in the Apocalypse reveal them, in respect to their order of coming; and he regards them *at hand*. For neither Lactantius, nor the Fathers generally, had any notion that the man of sin should continue more than his three years and a half literally; while we have learned by the lapse of time, that it must be taken, according to the language of the prophets, a day for a year. And according to the Sybilline oracles, he, together with the Romans universally in all ages, regards Rome as the *eternal city*, that is, enduring to the end of time, and coming to its end with the end of this world. True, he supposed the division into ten kingdoms would be speedily followed by the destruction of the city, and of the world, which we live to see prolonged 1362 years at least; but the end must come, although it may yet be prolonged greatly; and when it comes, the expectation of all the Fathers makes the judgment immediately follow.

There is some important instruction under this head, to be drawn from the use of the word *Babylon*, in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit by Babylon, at which place Peter wrote his first Epistle, may probably be understood to mean the same with Babylon mentioned in the Revelation. *Baronius*, a Cardinal of Rome, and the historian of the Latin hierarchy, admits and defends it. "All the Fathers, who have spoken on this subject, expressly testify that this epistle of Peter was written at Rome.—For that by Babylon he

meant Rome, they affirm without a doubt.—That it is known by the same name in the Revelation of St. John, is confessed by all, as I may say in hyperbole; since there are some, who, by Babylon, understand the universal realm of Satan." (Bar. Vol. 1. 380.)

Baronius proceeds: "Moreover that Rome is signified by Babylon, one must confess, however unwilling he may be.' And from this he goes into a full argument of the case, showing the absurdity, and the impossibility of supposing that Peter and John by Babylon signified any thing, but Rome. He cites abundance of well known facts in proof: such as that Peter did write that epistle at Rome, and that Jerome, Eusebius, and Tertullian, all of whom he quotes *verbatim*, give it as their own opinion, and the universal opinion of the other Fathers, that Peter and John, by Babylon, intended Rome. There was not in the world known at that time a place called Babylon, where there was a Christian church; so that the name is *of necessity* figurative, and then it applies only with truth to Rome.

Who can resist this opinion advanced by a cardinal of the very highest repute, supported by quotations from the early Fathers, and illustrated by the history of Rome, in the light of the prophecies, whether compiled by Roman or Greek, Jew or Protestant? I fully agree with Baronius, that the Apostles meant by Babylon, *Rome in its Idolatry;* and not the church of Rome in its purity: that the threatenings are not aimed at the Lamb's bride, but at Rome, the harlot mother of abominations. Baronius thinks that woman sank with ancient Paganism, to rise no more. Others there are who know that her worship is yet idolatrous, and, therefore, that the day of her trial is to come. And that the overthrow of this power is generally expected, I am sure; and the prophets and Fathers alike represent its termination in this world's catastrophe.

This is that last horn, which came up among the ten, after them, and before which three of them were pushed out by the roots; whose end Daniel describes at the judgment, precisely in accordance with this prophecy of the apostle Paul. Therefore, we should watch, not the clouds, but our own hearts, keeping them with all diligence; and, when the wind is boisterous, and fears roll mountains high, we shall not only be able to discover the blessed Jesus, walking on the waves; but also to hear his own voice, speaking to us through the storm: "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

"Come, let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." (Hos. 6: 12.) This word was fulfilled in Christ, the first fruits from the dead, in literal days of twenty-four hours each: and it may well be again fulfilled in the general resurrection, taking a day for a thousand years. But, for the time, we know perfectly, it shall be as a thief in the night; and that is the most we can know about it.

The "falling away" has come. The church has not kept the faith which Jesus delivered to the saints. She has left her first love, and ceases. O, how thoughtless,—she ceases to be "looking for that blessed hope, and, (or even,) the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us." (Tit. 2: 13.) We are less excusable than the ages gone by, because it is so evident from the writings of Paul and Peter and Daniel and John in the Apocalypse, that the time is drawing very near; and instead of the lukewarmness which prevails, and the selfish hardness of heart, and the discord; there should be great faith, and strong desire, provoking one another to love unfeigned, and not to wrath; and exhorting one another, says the apostle: "So much the more, as ye see the day ap-

proaching—for yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." (Heb. 10: 25, 37.)

And, now it has come to that the bride looks no more for the Bridegroom! According to one view, she is a poor widow importunately crying: "Avenge me of mine Adversary;" and praying: "Thy kingdom come;" without any faith in the prayer: but yet she cries: and, bless God we have the promise that he will hear, his own children, that cry day and night unto him, and avenge them speedily: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find on the earth?" (Luke 18: 8.)—According to another view all her friends are fallen asleep, both wise and foolish together, "while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept:" and what is worse, she keeps not her patience of hope, expecting her Lord: she in her impatience, *must go* to her Lord. Ay, this is the doctrine now, that the Lord comes not again for a long time: and so the happy dead lose no time, but are supposed to be gathered in the heavens to the Lord, before he comes; and before the last trumpet calls: and the Bride is supposed not so much to go forth to meet the Bridegroom at his coming, as she is made in the doctrine to go, where the beautiful modesty of the chaste bride forbids her to enter, even into the secret chambers of the Bridegroom before his glorious appearing. The church in the doctrine now goes one by one, not to meet the Lord coming in his glory; but to be present with the Lord in the heavenly glory,—the Bride to the Bridegroom. She no longer expects him, that is true; and so, forsooth, she must go to him. This is more the bold forwardness of the Carthagenian queen, and the fickleness of an ambitious and faithless one:

"Varium et mutabile semper"

than the humble delicacy of the true Bride, the Lamb's wife, who will tarry in the chambers of the house of her

mother, until the shout of the descending host is heard: "Behold, the Bridegroom COMETH!"—when the trump of the Archangel will send forth such a peal of triumph over Satan and Death, that all which are in their graves shall hear, and the dead will awake and come forth, to behold the glory of the Lord, both the righteous and the wicked together. Then the heavenly adorned Bride will bound with step so light to meet her returning Savior, that this world with all its works, will be left forgotten behind; and she will rise in the clouds, to greet her Lord all welcome in the air, and so be ever with the Lord.

Neither Abraham, nor any of the ancient worthies, appears to have yet received the things promised, in respect to the heavenly glory; in order "that they without us, should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11: 40.) And, we likewise must wait "yet for a little season, until their fellow servants, also, and their brethren that should be killed, as they were, should be fulfilled;" (Rev. 6: 11.) that all the children of God, and heirs of the promises, may come into possession of their inheritance forever in one band, under Christ, our king, "in the dispensation of the fulness of times" —"when God will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance," of which the Holy Spirit is the earnest, a part of the portion in hand, guaranteeing the covenant of promise, until the day of the redemption of the purchased possession, which is the day of the Lord Jesus. (Eph. 1: 10 to 15.)

This is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit: "At midnight, a cry was made: Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and *the door was shut.*—Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour, wherein the Son of man cometh." (Mat. 25: 13.) But to watch, in this connec-

tion, is alike unnecessary and impossible for the present, if the Son of man does not certainly come for a thousand years; or until after the expected millennium.

"O, says one; this is his final coming to judgment."

True; and in that lies the power of the doctrine to persuade men to repent, and to turn from Satan unto God; as the poet says:

"Delay not; delay not; the hour is at hand,
"The earth shall dissolve, and the heavens shall fade;
"The dead small and great in the judgment shall stand,
"What power, then, O sinner, shall lend thee its aid?"

"But it is not supposed that Christ will come to judgment yet a long time."

So the wicked suppose; and they harden themselves in sin.

"But surely there is a spiritual coming and kingdom, before the final coming of Christ to the judgment."

THE SPIRITUAL REIGN.

"Now awake, ye slumbering virgins,
"Trim your lamps; the bridegroom's near;
"Let your loins with truth be girded,
"Signs proclaim—he'll soon appear.
"Mark! the fig-tree budding shows the summer's near."

There are plainly but two advents of the Messiah: one in humility, which is past; and one in glory, which is at hand. Where then is the spiritual coming?

"In the millennium."

They that look for it *in this world*, postpone a glorious certainty, I think, for a very dubious experiment. No coun-

try, nor city, nor village, or combination of them, on the face of the whole earth, was ever long governed spiritually, with great satisfaction to the people. Some, which have attempted it with a high hand, have showed that they mistook their spirit. The experience of the church, and of the people, is not very favorable to any form of spiritual government, whose administration must be in the flesh still, and in the hands of sinful men. Those who expect it, reckon without due regard to the prince of this world, who has power in his kingdom; until the day of the redemption of the purchased possession: who has power over this present evil world, to afflict the just, to wear out the saints, and in war to prevail against them; and to persecute the righteous, and to worry the faithful with temptations in the heart, and temptations in the flesh, and temptations in the world.

"But the Adversary is to be bound in that day, and chained in the bottomless pit."

Amen! so let HIM come, who will bind the strong man, and spoil his goods. Then we shall have, not a spiritual coming merely, but the coming again of the Lord Jesus, in the clouds of heaven; and, also, the resurrection of the dead, and the kingdom of Jesus and of heaven, never to be shaken.

An old catechism in high repute, teaches that "Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in ascending up into heaven, in sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the last day."—A spiritual reign of a thousand years does not enter into this estimate of our Lord's exaltation. And it may not be admitted that his spiritual coming is the coming again of the holy Spirit; for that would imply that the Holy Spirit has left the world, which is not true. Therefore, Jesus cannot come again by his Spirit, seeing the promise of the Spirit was fulfilled eighteen hundred years ago, and he is to abide forever.

The coming of the Holy Spirit was not to rule the world, not to set up in the beginning, or now, or at any time hereafter, I think, a spiritual kingdom over this world; but solely to witness for the crucified Jesus, that he is in heaven, in the glorified flesh, at the right hand of the Father; and is coming in his time, to redeem the earth from the curse, and the dead from the grave, and to make all things inconceivably more glorious, than eye hath seen, or ear heard, or than hath entered into the heart of man, even the restitution of all things. This is the office of the Holy Spirit, not I think to reign in this world, but to prepare the way for the Lord's reign; to teach, not to govern this world; to reprove, admonish, and warn the world of the coming of the Lord Jesus, the appointed heir of all things, who will destroy this world, changing it with its heavens, and also our vile bodies, as a vesture folded up: and that he will soon fulfil all the promises to his chosen in the glorious kingdom of Messiah and of heaven.

The history of the church is evidence of the immense mischief that has flowed from the doctrine of the reigning power of the Holy Spirit in this world; a doctrine, which is not very plainly taught, if taught at all, in the holy Scriptures. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." (1 Cor. 14: 32.) This would be still true, if the prophet were on the throne of the world; and it would be the man who ruled, and not another; *not* the spirit of the prophet. That would admonish him: but he might rule contrary to the holy counsellor; and deceive both himself and others with the idea, that God alone ruled the world by the Spirit in his servant the prophet. We have seen some administrations of this sort, in the hands of men, who believed that the Lord in them reigned over their brethren, and over the whole civilized world. Those who have made the greatest claim to the governing of this world, by the Holy Spirit, have of all other rulers most grossly violated the laws of God, and the rights of man; and insulted all that is holy. So that I take it for a

principle, as well settled as in human experience any thing can possibly be, that a spiritual reign over this world, in the hands of sinful men, means a reign of THE MAN OF SIN: but the reign we look for, through the gospel, is to be in the hands of the righteous man, the Lord from heaven. This is a sure word of prophecy in place of a doubtful experiment of a spiritual reign in the flesh and blood: this is the kingdom of heaven, in place of this mortal, sinful, fleeting world.

THE COMFORTER.

"Let thy kind Spirit in my heart
"Forever dwell, O God of love;
"And light, and heavenly peace impart,
"Sweet earnest of the joys above."

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, spoke freely of the coming and office of the Comforter. We will search the record, and find how he speaks of him, whether as a king, or governor, of the world, or of the church, either singly or together.

Having warned his disciples that he should soon be separated from them, he said: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, (and yet the doctrine is, that he is *to govern the world,*) because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." (John 14: 16, 17, 18.)

The world is governed by one it does not see; but that is not a holy one. Jesus left not his people in the land of the region of the shadow of death, and of the prince of darkness, without a Comforter. He promised the Comforter, and also

himself to come again in "a little while." And the Comforter abides forever; that is, until death is swallowed up in the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of the prince of this world is executed in righteousness upon the world, by our Lord and Savior.

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14: 26.)

In all this, no authority, or ruling power, or sovereignty, is attributed to the Comforter, but the office of teacher, monitor, and Comforter; as in the following: "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, *he shall testify of me*; and *ye, also, shall bear witness*, because ye have been with me from the beginning." (John 15: 26.) Not, therefore, to reign for Jesus, was the Comforter sent; not to subdue the world to the obedience of the gospel, as many think; not to establish a kingdom over the world, that neither knows him, nor will receive him, "because it seeth him not;" but simply to testify of Jesus, was the Comforter sent, as the apostles themselves testified also: that the Father will put all enemies under the feet of Jesus, and send him forth in the times of refreshing, or *living again*, from the heavens which have received him up, "until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken, by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3: 21.) "The restitution of *all things*" will include the resurrection of the dead, undoubtedly: and the word αναψυξεως, or refreshing, means rather "*reviving, to come to life again;*" which sense of the word in this passage, is established by the second verse of the next chapter in Acts, where we are told that the Sadducees and priests and the captain of the temple seized the apostles, "being

grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." The only record of their preaching it, on the occasion complained of, is found in these two words: "refreshing" and "restitution;" and they are of a signification large enough in the Greek to include in them the doctrine of the resurrection. To teach and comfort his people, and to testify of Jesus, as the apostles themselves do, are so far found to be the office of the Holy Spirit: an office, not of sovereign might, or of power; but of my Spirit, saith the Lord. (Zech. 4: 6.)

"Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. (How plain it is, that the departure of which he spoke, was his ascension to heaven, when he did send the Comforter.) And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth—and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John, 16th chapter.)

The office of the Holy Spirit is to reprove the world of sin, and neither to govern the world, nor to punish the sinner. He admonishes of one to come after him, even Jesus, who will do that office, with excellent and terrible majesty. He, also, shows the Lord's people things to come, which is the prophetic office. But by no word is intimation given, that the Holy Spirit is to be the spiritual king of a spiritual kingdom in this world. No imagination of such a kingdom would enter the mind of a reader of these promises of the Holy Spirit. If I mistake not, the whole idea of a spiritual kingdom of heaven in this world, came into vogue, after the time that a certain bishop mounted a triple crown. I think it will prove strictly true, that the notion of a spiritual kingdom, in

the church over this world, of which the Holy Spirit is the head and arbiter, was never favorably entertained in the church; until the bishop of Babylon gave it currency, for the unity of the faith, and the preservation of good morals in all the churches, committed to his care with the keys of Peter and the words: *Pasce meas oves, Feed my sheep.* The annals of the church show who has long held the sceptre of universal empire, in the name of the Lord, presuming to bestow the Holy Spirit on whom he would, and withholding him from whom he would, even from whole nations, in punishment of the refractory spirit of their lawful sovereign; and these things we shall have occasion to find, I fear, so long as any one man dreams of his governing this world, in the right of a spiritual sovereign. Certainly, we find no mention of royal prerogatives in the office of the Comforter, as explained by the Lord to his apostles in the last conversation he freely held with them. He calls him Monitor, Teacher, Comforter, Reprover, Witness, Prophet, &c., or describes his office in the duty implied in these names; but he never calls him Prince, or Sovereign, or Ruler, or Judge, or Avenger, or any such name. So, likewise, the Holy Spirit has appeared to men, as the dove, as cloven tongues of fire, as a rushing mighty wind; but never as the lion of the tribe of Judah; or in any form to encourage the idea of his bearing the sceptre of this world for a season, or inspiring any sinful mortal to bear it for him. His whole revealed character is remote from this, as the gentle dove is from the soaring eagle.

The Holy Spirit, then, was not promised for a ruler, or king; nor at his coming did he exercise royal authority; but rather admonitory and consolitory. He said: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, preached the word of God. (Acts 13.) The Spirit, also, bade Peter go to Cornelius; and once forbade Paul to preach

in Asia, and again suffered him not to go into Bythinia. (Acts 11: 12, and 15: 6, 7.) Notwithstanding, this may all be consistent with the office of teacher and guide; and I take it to have been done in the exercise, rather of admonitory, than of sovereign authority. For lying to the Holy Ghost, Ananias and Sapphira fell down dead: and Paul and Stephen and the apostles, were full of the Holy Ghost, when they wrought mightily in word and deed for the glory of the name of the Lord Jesus. The churches, after the conversion of Saul, are said to have had rest: "walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 9: 31.)

The fear of God is a ruling *motive*, but not a sovereign one in this present evil world; nor is the Holy Spirit regarded as sovereign altogether, even in that famous council, when the apostles, with the whole multitude of the disciples at Jerusalem, sent chosen men with Barnabas and Paul "to the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia," on the subject of the Gentiles observing the law of Moses. The letter is written in the name of "*the Apostles, Elders, and Brethren*," and of no other; and having recited the occasion of sending it, the letter adds: "It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul—who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the *Holy Ghost and to us*, to lay upon you no greater burden, than these necessary things—from which, if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well." (Acts 15: 22, 3, 5, 8, 9.)

There are no emblems of royalty about this, not even as it regards the Holy Spirit. It is truly a republican letter, written in the name of all, for the benefit of all, under sanction of the Holy Ghost, and of the apostles and elders and brethren of the whole church assembled with one accord. This was before any imagination of a spiritual kingdom in

this world had seized hold of the church: but the time came, bringing not only the imagination of such a kingdom, but also the spiritual head and sovereign of the kingdom: and, be sure, the ensigns of his royalty are not wanting in the letters missive from his throne; and his decrees of council end not with a simple piece of friendly advice: "If ye observe these things, ye shall do well:" but with a broad and deep curse upon any man, who shall do, or *say* any thing to the contrary of this decree. "If any shall do or say contrary to this, let him be anathema."

The Roman mistakes the Holy Teacher given in Jesus' name, not to rule this world, not to subdue the world to the obedience of the gospel; but to prepare a people for the Lord, and to make straight the path of his return. The Roman has thought to rule the world by the sovereign counsel of the Holy Ghost; and still hopes to recover the Protestant nations, and to conquer the heathen. Protestants themselves are confidently anticipating for themselves, a similar victory, without taking into account the necessity of some form of a Pope to the perfection of their scheme; although they justly refuse the Roman. But we have all come under one condemnation, Jew and Gentile, Roman and Protestant: for we have regarded our Comforter and companion of heart, our Teacher and kind Reprover and Monitor, as one not caring for every soul of man; but rather for such as the council should commend to his notice; and as the Pope should bless with his hands. We have slighted this Holy Teacher, we have forsaken this Heavenly Teacher, therefore, we are scattered, divided, apostate, and fallen, warring about words, and rending and devouring our brethren in their good name, and in their honest, if yet mistaken zeal; until there is much reason to exclaim amidst all the triumph of glorious expectation, in that the millennium is at hand: "How is the gold become dim; the most fine gold changed!"

There will ever be mountains to flee to, for all the anointed of the Lord, until the Son of Man come. In the mean time, the Holy Spirit is the earnest of his coming: the Spirit of Truth testifies of Jesus, that Jesus is the anointed king, on the holy hill of Zion; that Jesus the crucified is "the appointed heir of all things;" and that he will surely come quickly into the possession of the inheritance of his everlasting kingdom, in the resurrection of the dead, which is the refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the restitution of all things. If we will return unto the Holy Teacher, he will return unto us; for he abideth for ever: and in him our faith will again become one, even as our Lord is one, and our baptism one, the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.

"His own soft hand shall wipe the tears
"From every weeping eye;
"And pains and groans and griefs and fears
"And death itself shall die.

"How long, dear Savior, O how long
"Shall this bright hour delay?
"Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time,
"And bring the welcome day."

Enough has been said to arouse the attention of the reader to the immense interest and value of the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven at hand. This is my sole object. He that would understand the doctrine, must learn it, not of my page, but out of the Holy Scriptures.

I would not encumber the glorious promise with my words, therefore, I refrain for the present from speaking of its practical value in expounding the doctrines of repentance, faith, salvation, and the resurrection of the dead; and simply ob-

serve of its practical value generally, that it is paramount to all other doctrines and considerations in the believer's mind: because he that watches, not knowing when the time is, will be afraid to smite his fellow servants, or to indulge with the glutton, and the drunken, and the wanton; but he will rather be a faithful and wise servant, in all matters entrusted to him of the Lord, having it written on his heart: "Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods." (Mat. 24: 46, 47.)

"Take heed, watch, and pray: for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13.) This is the practical value of the doctrine, to excite in men a careful, watchful, prayerful spirit; and to lead them in a peaceable, benevolent, and righteous and holy life. You can see that for yourself, kind reader; and, therefore, I shall commend to you the doctrine, and endeavor to show with you the practical illustration of its inestimable value and worth. If you find it beget this good spirit, and this desire after holiness of heart and of life, you will cherish it; otherwise, there is some mistake about it; and, therefore, search for yourself the Holy Scriptures, committing your open heart to the Holy Teacher sent down in Jesus' name; and I fear no evil in the doctrine you will thus learn: for these are the appointed and chosen and infallible means of grace, which the pure mind and lowly, the humble and child-like spirit, may use with the most perfect confidence of being led thereby into all truth.

But if the vacillating spirit, which is in the world, rashly takes hold of this doctrine, and regardless of the word, "Ye know not when the time is," determines that it is *enesteken*, right upon us; and that it will be this year, or the next, or some other certain time; then extravagances follow, which make the holy grieve, and afflict the children of the kingdom of heaven. Extremes often follow each other: and while I protest with earnestness against that which post-

pones the coming of the Lord to the judgment, until after a thousand years of peace and safety; and while it is plain, that many prophecies conspire to show the coming of the Lord, to be indeed upon us very soon; yet I am sure the experience of the past is sufficient to inculcate the lesson of moderation; moderation, in the exhibition of the great truth; for that delay, which seems to prolong the promise of his coming, may yet be greatly extended through the infinite power of the Father, who has expressly reserved the times in his own power. (Acts 1: 7.) It will certainly be fulfilled at the last with the celerity of the lightning, like the unexpected coming of the flood in its day.

"Let your moderation be known unto all men: the Lord is at hand." (Phil. 4: 5.) Use not the terrors of the Lord rashly; but rather to persuade men; and above all, hold up to the famishing, suffering, distressed, and afflicted poor of all nations, who now groan under the yoke of the god of this world, the glorious promise, (and, to all sufferers in the flesh, most precious promise,) of the kingdom of Jesus and of heaven at hand; "and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said: Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." (Rev. 21: 4, 5.)

The word of God is a sword, which requires to be handled carefully; especially by the young and inexperienced: and if taken up and handled rashly, will it not wound quicker, than any blade of steel, him that mistakes its keen point for its hilt? Zion bleeds from self-inflicted wounds. But, if wielded skilfully by the faithful soldier of the cross, presenting the point, which the Lord has made of heavenly-tempered command "*Repent*," to the heart of the unbeliever, and bursting through his seven-fold shield of incredulity, with the

overwhelming news: "For the kingdom of Jesus and of heaven is at hand!" and the holy word will be found at this day, to be the sword of the Spirit, quick and powerful, as ever, "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4: 12.)

This weapon is in all the household of faith, in the hands of every man. It is for the most part, however, hung up for Sunday, when it should be daily handled. Then, so many would not be unskilful in the scriptures; mistaking the edge of the sword for its broadside, and sometimes seizing it by the sharp part, instead of the inflexible hilt; and thus deeply wounding, not the scornful foe, but their own right hand.

CHRIST OUR PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING.

"Jesus, I love to trace
"Throughout the sacred page
"The footsteps of thy grace,
"The same in every age!
"O grant that I may faithful be
"To clearer light vouchsafed to me."

With these simple views of the subject, accord the offices of Christ, who is declared to be a Prophet, and a Priest, and lastly a King; and is so presented by the fathers to the children, in their catechism.

He was a prophet in the day of his humility; and he prophesied of the kingdom of heaven continually. But in that day he did not officiate at the altar, or in any manner discharge the duty of high priest, or the office of a priest, at all; until he laid down his life on the cross, having closed his prophetic office with the public and solemn declaration: "It is finished;" and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. Certainly, in the day of his humility, he wholly de-

clined the exercise of regal power, on all occasions; although he did not conceal the fact, that he is a king; but confessed it, and taught and preached that he is a king; and that his kingdom is not of this world, but is nigh at hand. He neither received the title, nor exercised the power of a king; though Pilate, in contempt of the Jews, as well as in honor of the Just One, inscribed this title over his head, as the accusation, for which he was nailed to the cross! (Mark 15: 26.)

Therefore, the idea that his *offices* are from the first concurrent, is not countenanced in the gospel; but quite the contrary, it seems to me. A marked line of distinction was observed on earth, by which he bounded his prophetic office, and separated it, from both his priesthood and his crown. And it is not too much to believe, that he preserves the same distinction in heaven, separating the office of Priest from that of King; and discharging now only the office of High Priest, as upon earth, he discharged only the office of a Prophet. His prophetic office was temporary; his priesthood is enduring; but his crown and throne are eternal.

"We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;" (Heb. 8: 1,) of whom the apostle avers, only four verses further along, that, "*if he were on earth*, he should not be a Priest, seeing that there are priests, that offer gifts according to the law." So it would seem to be essential to the Priesthood of Messiah, that he should leave the earth, and enter within the veil, and sit "on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities and powers, being made subject unto him." (1 Pet. 3: 22.) There he received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, spoken of in the 2d Psalm, and in Acts: "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this—therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, both Lord and Christ:"

(Acts 2: 33, 36;) both *Lord* and *Christ*, by anointing him with the fulness of the Holy Spirit, in earnest of that kingdom of which he is the appointed heir; and is, in due time, to be the actual Lord; even when the time comes for the saints to possess the kingdom.

And Jesus now sheds down the same Spirit on the heirs of the promises, (which Spirit he received of the Father,) in token of their adoption to be the sons of God; and as the earnest of their future inheritance, in the kingdom of Messiah, when Jesus will take possession of the purchase he has made with his own blood, the day of redeeming it from the dominion of the god of this world having fully come.

These two things I take for certain by universal consent:

1. That Jesus has finished the *personal* discharge of his prophetic office.

2. That Jesus is now *personally* officiating, as our High Priest, in heaven.

And it is reasonable, that, in the end of time, he will conclude his personal priesthood in heaven, as he has already finished his prophetic office on earth: and then he will personally come, (Rev. 3: 21,) the king of everlasting ages, *on his own throne;* to which office he is anointed already; the Son of God, "whom he hath appointed heir of all things;" and who is at the right hand of the Father, "expecting, until his enemies be made his footstool." That is the day of "the redemption of the purchased possession," (Eph. 1,) and "the redemption of our body;" (Rom. 8: 23,) even the resurrection of the dead.

In Heb. 7: 17, it is written: For he testifieth, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedeck. *Εις τον αιωνα*, "forever," is just as properly translated "to the *end of time*." In that form, it would read: "Thou art a priest *to the end of time*, after the order of Melchisedeck." And this translation expresses the fact exactly, that Christ is a Priest from

the time he said of his prophetic office, "It is finished;" to the end of time; when he will come in his everlasting kingdom: "and of his *kingdom* there shall be no end." (Luke 1: 33.)

One thing interesting may be noted, in this connection: that the Lord, in the Apocalypse, reveals himself repeatedly to his servant John, with overwhelming glories, in the heavens, but never as wearing a crown, until he comes to gather the harvest of the earth. To determine this matter, the reader must peruse Revelation for himself; but in chap. 14, v. 14, he will find the first vision of our Lord wearing a crown; which is soon followed by another, in which he appears at the head of the heavenly host, wearing MANY CROWNS, in the great day.

The office of High Priest was one of highest dignity and glory; and it was of greatest authority, over all the ministers of the temple, and the true worshippers of the Lord. But it was distinct in kind from that of the regal office, which is above all. Jesus is our High Priest in glory, on the Heavenly Father's throne, our Advocate and Intercessor there, until the end of the world. Then he will be King on his own throne, and on the throne of his father David, in the re-union of earth to heaven, all things being restored and made anew in the resurrection of the dead. And thus we see how identical with all the hopes of a christian, as well as with the doctrine of the gospel, is the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

"Daughter of Zion, from the dust
"Exalt thy fallen head;
"Again in thy Redeemer trust,
"*He calls thee from the dead.*
"Awake, awake, put on thy strength,
"Thy beautiful array,
"The day of freedom dawns at length,
"The Lord's appointed day.
"And though the *universe shall burn*,
"And God his works *destroy*,
"With songs thy ransomed shall return
"And everlasting joy."

Our sacred melodies are stored with sentiments of this kind, which we have accustomed ourselves to understand in a figure, trusting to the Egyptian's ladder, rather than to the faith of Israel. But reflection will show, that the poet himself did not use the expressions metaphorically, but literally with the prophet. "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves." (Ez. 37: 12, 13.) Such is the return of the Jews. A "*thus saith the Lord God*" should be exempted from that liberty, we use with the language of the poet; but in this day of strong delusion, when many have not the love of the truth, they accustom others to treat "*thus saith the Lord*" with the freedom of a poet's fancy; and, therefore, why should not the faithless generation of Carthage, as well as of Rome, be suffered to believe the lie; if that is it, which preaches the kingdom of heaven in this world, in the church, and in the gospel dispensation, whether it receive, or reject the Roman bishop for its vicegerent?

The truth is, Paul cherished no hope, he preached no gospel that did not keep the name of Jesus and of the resurrection united together. Indeed, he put the whole gospel, on many public and solemn occasions, into the form of the single hope of the resurrection of the dead. But, now, what particular *hope* has the church, (I admit her undoubting faith in the doctrine;) but what cherished *hope* has the church in the resurrection of the dead? I think a very faint, indefinite, and cheap value she puts on this doctrine of apostolic glory, and of the heavenly kingdom, while those in her outer courts are for turning the whole thing into a figure of speech.

This great and glorious and blessed doctrine of the gospel is opened in the utmost extent of its grandeur, to the right apprehension of a very pagan, by the simple truth of the

kingdom of Jesus, and of heaven at hand. I would enlarge upon it, and upon other topics of highest interest; but I forbear, lest by many words the doctrine of the coming king, in his everlasting kingdom, should be overlaid, and by any means shaded from the reader's sight. I leave them here, with a full conviction, that the doctrine of the kingdom, which at first view, seemed to some, not very important, if true, will finally prove to every mind that embraces it, on a careful study of the Bible, what the river *Alpheus* was, under the hand of *Hercules*, to the accumulations of thirty years, from three thousand cattle, in one royal stable: it did not harm the cattle, nor the stable, but it cleansed and sweetened and changed all, down to the very foundations: and so will this doctrine gently remove all the refuges of lies, the lurking places of dark error, the musty walls of sectarian division, the foul slanders and calumnies of brethren; and it will perfectly restore in their original simplicity and majesty and beauty, the "one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism" of the primitive church: it will exhibit in their grandeur the distinct offices of Christ, as our Prophet, Priest, and everlasting King: it will unfold in light the doctrine of Faith, the duty of Repentance, the hope of Salvation, and the kingdom of the Resurrection: and it will enable us the better to understand the difference between this world, and the world to come.

HOLY CHARITY.

The glory, however, that it throws upon the mysterious character, and office of the Holy Spirit, is too interesting to my own mind, and solemn, and, at the same time, wholly new, to allow me to stop, until I have briefly shown it. I am not worthy to discourse on a theme so holy. I am a sin-

ful man, O Lord; a man of unclean lips. It is not for any righteousness in me, that I have undertaken this work; but for the truth of God; and I cannot omit to speak of the Holy Spirit of truth, as seen in the light of the kingdom of heaven at hand. The Lord incline our hearts to love the truth, and to commune with the Spirit of truth, and to learn of him, the Teacher sent down from heaven in Jesus' name, to guide his people into all truth: for, that we have inclined unto *other teachers* is the plain reason, why we have once fallen into a dire apostacy from the faith first delivered to the Saints; and into a Babylonian captivity to the Man of sin; and into darkness of vision, and blindness of mind, and error of doctrine and of life. The Lord Jesus has shed down the Holy Spirit from the heavenly hill, to bring all things in his word to our remembrance; and to open his dark sayings to our understanding; and learning of him in charity, we shall never part company, on the straight and narrow way to the kingdom of heaven.

But let no reader mistake learning, for charity; or the knowledge of mysteries, for charity; or the gift of prophecy, for charity: no, not even the faith that can remove mountains, for charity.—Nor let the reader mistake for charity the Spirit, which may give all its goods to feed the poor, and its body to the stake; and yet knows not how *to suffer long, and be kind.* Charity envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoices not in iniquity, *but rejoices in the truth;* beareth all things, believeth all things. Charity never faileth: but prophecy shall come to an end, the miracle of tongues shall cease, and even knowledge shall vanish away into perfect vision of all truth, when that which is perfect is come with the Lord from heaven.

This is an age of the *liberal,* but not charitable, spirit, or I mistake the times. This is an age of princely generosity, and of ready martyrdom for opinion's sake; but it is also an age that seeks it own with unsurpassed selfishness; and that

cannot *suffer long*, even the most trifling differences from the cherished belief and expectation of the heart. This is an age, neither to bear all things, nor to believe all things; on the contrary it is very "easily provoked," and not a little puffed with its increase of knowledge. I would deeply impress on my own mind, and especially in this connection, the holy truth:

"Had I the tongues of Greeks and Jews,
"And nobler speech than angels use,
"If love be absent, I am found
"Like tinkling brass, an empty sound.

"Were I *inspired* to preach and tell
"All that is done in heaven and hell;
"Or could my *faith* the world remove,
"Still I am nothing without love.

"If love to God, and love to men
"Be absent, all my hopes are vain:
"Nor tongues, nor gifts, nor fiery zeal
"Can e'er the work of love fulfil."

Deeply would I impress on my own mind, and deeply on the mind of the reader, and especially of such as make important discoveries for themselves in the Holy Scriptures, that the effect of knowledge is to puff up, and that the end of it is to vanish away: but only christian charity abides forever; and, without this grace, all others may prove at last no better than the hypocrite's hope: or the seed which sprang up among thorns; and was unfruitful. It is essential to know the will of God, in order to do it; and it is also absolutely necessary to do his will, in order to know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or of man; whether it be according to the mind of the Spirit, or to the imagination of this world.

Therefore, let not the reader mistake the great learning, which belongs to many, for christian love; nor the writer'

to whom some discoveries are made, himself mistake the discernment of holy truth, for the full discharge of holy duty, and *the life of christian charity :* for only

"This is the grace that lives and sings,
"When faith and hope shall cease;
"'Tis this shall strike our joyful strings,
"In the sweet realms of bliss."

Therefore, my brother, think never of the man, whether he be small or great, strait or bent; for in different circumstances he may be each of these; but think only of the love of Jesus to the fallen race, which changes not; and if that love be reflected in the life, you know the Sun, whence this light comes, and to which alone all the glory and the praise are forever due.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

"Where is the blessedness I knew
"When first I saw the Lord?
"Where is the soul refreshing view
"Of Jesus and his word?"

The Holy Ghost witnesses in every age, that Jesus is exalted, to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins: (Acts 5: 31, 32.) but especially above all others, in that age, when the preachers with great power gave witness of the resurrection of Jesus, "*great grace was upon all.*" (Acts 4: 33.) I am deeply and solemnly impressed with the fact, that in the time, when believers continued "daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house," as it were *in daily expectation of the Lord's coming*, they "eat their meat with gladnesss, and singleness of heart, praising God, and having

favor with all the people: and the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved." (Acts 2: 46.)

So long as the church kept in this lively recollection of the death, and this lively hope of the near coming, of her Lord, the Holy Spirit was active with the ministry, to convert the nations of the earth: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, *multitudes both of men and women.*" (Acts 5: 14.) So long as the apostles boldly confronted the chief priests and elders, with the doctrine of his exaltation to glory and soon returning with power, whom they with wicked hands had taken, and caused to be put to death, saying: "We are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him;" (Acts 5: 22.) in all that time: "The word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient unto the faith." (Acts 6: 7.) And this success accompanied the word not only in doomed Jerusalem; but in Antioch and Ephesus, through Syria and Asia, (Acts 19: 20.) and, to a great extent, in all parts of the Roman empire; (Col. 1: 6, 23.) until that formidable dragon was subdued, and cast down, and made obedient to the gospel of the coming kingdom of the Son of God. Without question, *all the great triumphs of the gospel were made in this faith,* the Holy Spirit never failing to seal it on the hearts of idolatrous nations, with converting power, so long as the church held, and the ministry preached the doctrine. But, when in the fourth century, the faith of the Lord's speedy return, gradually yielded to a hope, that the saints had already got the promised kingdom, the master of the worldly household began openly to teach, that "the Lord delayeth his coming:" and he went on, also, to display openly the signs of tyranny, insobriety, and faithless hypocrisy, which the Lord foretold, (Mat. 24: 48 to 51.) as certain to accompany this doctrine "My Lord delayeth his coming."

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and he withdrew from the approach of this error, shrinking from its pollution of the heart, and its corruption of the faith of the church, even before the open apostacy of the fourth century. His witnessing power gradually diminished, in the primitive church, in proportion, I think, as this primitive form of the faith grew faint and dim: until it came to that, in process of time, all the Holy Spirit which the nominal church had, was supposed to come through the Pope, and to be wholly subject to his dispensation at will! And, then, was such a state of things, as was taken for the kingdom of heaven among the nations! But surely their very kings served a hard master in the flesh; and wore a galling chain; and a yoke by no means easy; and a burden far from being light. They forsook the faith of the *gospel* of the kingdom, for the sake of the power of this world in hand: and dearly they paid for their delusion.

But not satisfied with this experiment, our age are making all ready to try it over again in the flesh and blood; without having settled the question, who shall be the *chiefest* among them in that day, and who shall be Pope in this kingdom of heaven; though the indications seem to favor his republican election. But, then, ye wise; so long as this world stands, any administration will of necessity have an opposition; and though it were one administration of heaven, by election, how could it fail of sin in the opposition, yea, of sin crawling by instinct into the very ranks of the administration, though Satan were bound?

It has not occurred to the opposers of the personal reign of Messiah, that in the spiritual kingdom for which they look, there must be some king, or head of the commonwealth: and he must be carnal, so long as flesh is flesh, however much the holy one may sanctify him. The difference between him and the present line of Popes seems to be in the true holiness of the spiritual kingdom which is to be set up, and the manifest corruptions of the Roman kingdom. The present line of

Popes come to their office by election, with much gravity of manner, and a thorough persuasion of their sanctification resting on their own mind, and on the mind of the millions who own their sway. I am willing to learn; but I shall be slow to believe under the gospel dispensation, in any perfection of the human nature, which papal power, or spiritual supremacy, will not corrupt. A child of the Lord has the spirit of the Lord; but set him on high to rule over his brethren, by any mode of elevation, if it were the nomination of thunder, or the ballot of the people, and the son of Adam will learn to domineer, and will be tempted in an evil hour to taste forbidden fruit. Adam in innocence fell, and how in sin can his children stand? They are irretrievably down, until Jesus raises them from the dust; and in him they are secure for ever. He is the chosen king, the anointed king, the legitimate king, the appointed heir of all things: and it is delusion to think of any other ruler in righteousness, to govern the earth, but the Lord our righteousness.

"All hail, the glorious day,
"When through the heavenly way,
"Lo, he shall come!
"While they who pierced him wail,
"His promise shall not fail,
"Saints, see your king prevail,
"Lord Jesus, come!"

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH, AND GIBBON THE HISTORIAN.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
"His wonders to perform."

The faithful historian, whose elegant page is no less admired, than trusted, by the same who speak very lightly of Gibbon's name; the historian of all others most thoroughly read in the works and writings of the decline and fall

of the Roman Empire; himself taken to be an unbeliever; and, so far as between sides, always held by different sects to be impartial; the honest and impartial historian truly says: "IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH, the influence of truth was *very powerfully strengthened* by an opinion, which, however it may deserve respect for its usefulness and antiquity, *has not been found agreeable to experience.* It was universally believed that the end of the world, and the kingdom of heaven were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it was preserved by their earliest disciples, and those who understood, in their literal sense, the discourses of Christ himself, *were obliged* to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, before that generation was totally extinguished, which had beheld his humble condition, and which might still be witness of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian, or Hadrian. The revolution of seventeen centuries has instructed us, not to press too closely the mysterious language of prophecy and revelation; but, as long as for wise purposes *this error was permitted to subsist in the church, it was productive of the most salutary effects,* on the faith and practice of Christians, who lived in the awful expectation of that moment, when the globe itself, and all the various race of mankind, should tremble at the appearance of their divine Judge."

For this very end the Lord preached the holy truth; its salutary effects on the heart and life of Christians; on the faith and practice of those who believe in his word! What a testimony is here! And this from an infidel in reputation! Surely he estimated the practical value of the doctrine with judgment: and "the salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians" wrought in the primitive church, by this supposed "*error*," were worth having. The same would have been convenient at any time, from the fourth to the fifteenth century. Indeed, it would have been almost worth

while, in that dark time, to have reverted to the origina "ERROR," for the sake of obtaining some bright evidence, that Christian *faith and practice* themselves "*were permitted to subsist in the church.*" It were better even now, to have these abound with one error, than to be quite barren of them, for the sake of that "*error.*" Suppose it were an error; it was certainly a very singular one; for, "as long as—it was permitted to subsist in the church, it was productive of the most salutary effects, on the faith and practice of Christians!" No doubt of it; and they had much better remained in the "*error,*" to this day: then all the reign of the man of sin would have been outside of the faithful and practical church; although it would have come in the name of truth, with lying wonders: better have let the *error subsist* to this time; and, then, *we should have the primitive faith,* which most of us would be willing to accept at hazard, if we could fairly lay our hands on it, in this day of Babylonian confusion. Better have let it remain; for the apostles did teach it, predict it, and proclaim it; and, on the whole, the church is safer with the apostles in one "*error,*" than to be exactly right with the world, and with the man of sin. Better have let it remain; for Jesus is a Prince of no mean character! O, he is faithful, and his word may be taken *literally,* though it oblige the hearer, "*to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, before that* GENERATION *was totally extinguished.*" It is better to study faithfully what is written, than to be wise above what is written.

"O faithless and perverse generation!" have ye really passed away; and so made void the word of the Lord?

"O Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites!" have ye indeed left the world to stand, and the word of Jehovah to fall?

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken," have ye ceased from among the very apostles of the Lord? (Luke 24: 25.)

"O generation (or race) of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" (Mat. 12: 34.)

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell;" (Mat. 23: 33,) except, by the very faithfulness of that Jesus, whose word you impugn? Truly, ye are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the *children* of them which killed the Lord: for, *neither your fathers believed, else they would not have killed the Lord of glory.*

"Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation:" or sinful race. (Mat. 23: 36.)

We are more content to interpret this of the age of Judas, than of our age. But it may be doubted, whether any one *age* will be required to answer for the sin of *all other ages*, in addition to its own. "*Generation*" does not mean *age*, however, in the first verse of Matthew's gospel, nor in any subsequent verse quoted here, or referred to. "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," means the book of his *lineage* in the flesh. And a common dictionary will give half a dozen meanings to the word generation, before *age*, either of which will relieve this passage, in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, from all difficulty on that score. Gibbon did not search this word with care, though he speaks of the doctrine with excellent judgment, and dissents with praiseworthy modesty. Generation means race.

The summary of the history of the doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth, Gibbon states thus, from the era of Constantine, until when it was held universally.

"The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth, was at first treated as a profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected, as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism."

And this, too, is nearly step by step according with the church's apostacy; until now the same sect can barely hold together, solely for want of this ruling principle of faith and

love, which is able to make all believers one in the Lord, at his near coming.

But that modest word of Gibbon concerning this opinion of the primitive church, that it "has not been found agreeable to experience," deserves notice.

It was agreeable to experience in that it worked agreeably; but he thinks it failed in point of fact.

"Did it not fail in point of fact?"

With firmness, I say, No; at the top of my voice; for it is the word of God, and I rather believe with the father of the faithful, counting on God's truth and infinite power to fulfil his word, than to doubt his acknowledged word, on the evidence of my own senses. I know, in my own senses, I am a sinner. Why, therefore, should I trust that flesh, which is ever ready to betray me, rather than my God, whose faithfulness is of old from everlasting?

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
"But trust him for his grace."

"You are an unreasonable man!"

I might appeal from your decision to the final bar; not that I think you will care to prosecute the matter there; but only to recall the fact, that all our life should be ordered in reason with reference to the bar of Christ's judgment: and what will stand examination there, we may not reasonably distrust here. *Now* to hope in him against hope; and now to believe in *his acknowledged word*, as it were against the evidence of my own sinful senses, will not displease him in that day: I hope not. And, certainly, while I feel that sin reigns in my body unto death, I will believe in him whose word is eternal life, against the evidence of my sinful body. This is my confidence, that eternal life will explain all; and I cannot hope to inherit that, by any reasonable share of unbelief; but by the most implicit faith. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I know he will slay me, as the body must die; but I

hope in his mercy, *because of his word.* The Lord be praised.

"Fixed on this rock will I remain,
"When heart shall fail, and flesh decay;
"A rock which shall my soul maintain,
"When earth's foundations melt away."

Gibbon modestly says the doctrine is very good in its operation, and respectable for its antiquity, (and, I will add, credible for its source;) but he thinks it is not agreeable to *experience.* I commend the manner of the unbeliever to the imitation of some bolder spirits of this age.

The experience of this world is quite too short, in that way, to overturn the divine word. The experience of one age sometimes reverses the decisions of another; and all our decisions go up for final settlement, to the judgment seat. Then, it may be, the word of the Judge will appear to have been a safer guide in this world, than human experience; seeing that the *word works well,* like eternal truth; while the "*experience*" has launched the church into a sea of troubles, which, like wicked error, continually lashes up dirt.

"But, after all, must you not admit, that the primitive church erred in supposing the day of judgment so near at hand?"

I would not fail of dignity in discoursing of this subject, nor yet fail of satisfying any seeker after holy truth. Therefore, "if our *gospel* be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4: 3, 4.) The primitive christians were *not* mistaken in this matter. Ask any of them.

Tell me, Peter, were not you mistaken in saying: "The end of all things is at hand?" (1 Pet. 4: 7.)

Peter answers: These are they of whom it is written: "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying: Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet. 3: 3, 4.) "Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." v. 17.

James, let me inquire of you: Were you strictly correct in saying: "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (Jam. 5: 8.)

James might say: "For the resolution of such a doubt, it is written: *Be patient*, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord: *stablish your hearts:* behold the Judge standeth before the door." (James 5: 7, 9.)

John, was it proper in good faith for you to say it was the last time, eighteen hundred years ago?

"Little children, *it is the last time:* and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, *even now are there* many Antichrists; *whereby we know that it is the last time.*" (1 John 2: 18.) Truly, if ye are little children, ye will believe; "that when Christ shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.) (1 John 2: 28.)

Jude, you are a prophet of few words, what are we to understand by "*the last time?*"

Jude replies: It is that *time*, in which there should be "*mockers;*—who separate themselves, sensual, not having the spirit:" denying the Lord and the faith: "behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints." (Jude 18: 19, 14.)

Paul, are you of the same mind still: "Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry?" (Heb. 10: 37.)

Paul replies: "Ye have need of patience:" (Heb. 10: 36.) but "the just shall live by *faith.*" (Gal. 3: 11.) Jesus our Lord has said: "Have faith in God." (Mark 11: 22.)

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my word shall not pass away." (Mat. 54: 35.)

You see, therefore, they are every one of the same mind still; notwithstanding "it has not been found agreeable to experience." But suppose now we ask honest Mr. Gibbon himself, whether he remains of opinion still that this doctrine "has not been found agreeable to experience?" He candidly replies: "So far as I am personally experienced, I confess, the doctrine is true; *literally true*; and the whole world will soon find it so, "agreeable to experience." O, yes, a few short years makes an incalculable change in the experience of man; but the holy word abides true forever."

Thus, "the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ" shines to the believer, foreshowing those things which experience will find, in the world to come. "I have five brethren," said a man of experience: let me go warn them, that they come not to this place?—But the Father of the faithful replied: They *have* Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.—And he said: Nay, father Abraham, but they would *believe*, if one should go unto them from the dead. And he said, If they hear neither Moses nor the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." And the world does not believe Jesus, who is risen from the dead, nor do they believe his word, that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

However, I spend time on this subject, grasping it only as the word of God; and having it so, I will not give it up for *any appearances* whatsoever; nor for any "experience" of this world. What I would impress on the mind of the reader is, that by the testimony of all, the primitive church held this doctrine, and, in the strength of it, made all the church's victories. From the time the church ceased to hold it in simplicity, she ceased to conquer; and from the time she treated it as a "profound allegory," she openly apostatised;

and from the time she regarded it as "a doubtful opinion," she shamefully lost territory, as well as purity; and by the time she rejected it "as the absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism," she was already sunk in the dark embrace of the Man of sin, and Son of perdition: and the church has now in consequence long broken the bread of the eucharist with downcast face; and drank of the cup of blessing, with a heavy heart, unmindful of her returning Lord, her Redeemer, her Deliverer from the yoke of Egyptian bondage, and her Savior from those who do oppress her. There is no joy in the feast; no foretaste of bliss; not a communion of the Spirit of holy truth and love; because the Holy Spirit cares not much, I think, to associate in the house, where there is no light burning, to welcome the returning Lord. If the lamps have all gone out, and the porter is asleep, He seems to pass by for more faithful households: and, indeed, the sound of strife, sometimes, where the lamps are burning, forbids his entrance; and so, from the time of the ten kingdoms, we have had a spiritless, graceless, faithless church, compared with that of the first ages: and to this day a Lilliputian race inhabits Zion; and the glorious displays of divine grace have almost forsaken the earth.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"The Spirit breathes upon the word
"And brings the truth to light."

But within a half century past a cry has been raised, amidst the Egyptian darkness: Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him! such as had not before blest the ears of man, since the fourth century: and the True Witness of Jesus, and comforter of his people, has again sealed this testimony in converting power, when it has been earnestly preached, such has often struck whole cities and regions of

country with solemn conviction of the exaltation of Jesus, and of his soon coming in glory, to Judge the world. Since the noble effort to preach and to publish the gospel in all lands, has been resolutely sustained by the churches; and especially in the earlier day of the effort, when disappointment did not offend the faithful, the most extraordinary awakenings and revivals have at times blessed large sections of our country; the Holy Spirit evidently delighting with the people of God, in the prospect of Satan's final overthrow, at the coming and kingdom of our blessed Lord. From this holy and prevalent spirit has come many sacred melodies, like the Missionary hymn, which speaks according to the mind of the Spirit,—although it be commonly sung blindfold, under the delusion of the god of this world:

"From Greenland's icy mountains,
"To India's coral strand."

The beautiful hymn, perfect in all its parts, and rich in the full freight of rapture it bears sweetly along, would still be no way better, without the last lines, than a full rigged ship with top sails set in a charming breeze, having neither tiller nor helm:

"Till o'er our ransomed nature,
"The Lamb for sinners slain;
"Redeemer, King, Creator,
"In bliss *returns to reign*."

This last line shapes the course of the entire hymn to the mind of the Spirit, and to the mind of the Poet.

Those feeble attempts to return to her first love, though very imperfect, have been greatly blessed of the Comforter. Many men have looked, and do now look, in the last time, for a latter rain of divine grace, (Joel 2: 23. James 5: 7.) answering to the former, which introduced the gospel dispensation, without having any reference, on their part, to the

personal coming and reign of the Lord Jesus: while many who have greatly distinguished themselves, both in ancient and in modern times, for maintaining the faith and hope of the Lord's speedy return to reign, have also expected a forerunner of his glorious advent, corresponding to the Baptist, who preceded the Lord's first advent; but more glorious and exalted, as the second advent is to be more glorious; the promised Elijah, to come before the great and notable day of the Lord.

Nor are these unreasonable expectations, in either view: and I am myself struck with no little surprise and admiration, but I am moved to wonder and amazement, at the perfect parallel between the offices of him who came in the spirit and power of Elias, before the Lord in his humility, and the Holy Spirit of promise, whom the Lord sent in his exaltation, to glory, to be the forerunner, to prepare the way of his second advent; which, being in the glory of the Father, will be altogether worthy both of the Father and the Comforter, and of the kingdom of heaven.

John the Baptist and the Spirit of truth witness that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Both are the *voice* of one crying in the wilderness: Repent, repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! Both *baptise* for the remission of sins.

Both *prepare* the way of the Lord, and make his path of coming straight. Both are "*the friend of the Bridegroom*," and rejoice with him: but they have not the Bride. Do you not remember how John himself sent to inquire of Jesus: "Art thou he that should come; or do we look for *another?*" (Mat. 11: 3.) He sent *two* of his disciples, and sent them on purpose; and they did their errand with perfect accuracy, according to Luke 7: 19, 20. This all goes to show that John was in earnest about it; and the record is made for our instruction.—The question is explicit; the answer is not yes, or no; but this: Go tell John what you see, and

that the poor have the gospel preached unto them: "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." The answer maintains the pre-eminence of Jesus; and, yet, does not forbid looking for another; who, since he came, has not ceased to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come; (John 16: 8 to 12.) as John himself had solemnly and earnestly done, up to the time of his imprisonment. Both John and the Spirit of truth *witness of Jesus*, that he is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. (John 1: 29.)—*Both come* for a witness of the *Light*, that all men through him might believe: neither of them are that Light, but they were alike sent to bear witness of that Light; and I think the history shows, how the Spirit of truth delights in his office, always bearing witness to the hearts of both preacher and hearer, when the exaltation and glory and coming kingdom of the crucified Jesus are the theme of discourse.

Observe, too, how the priests and the Levites were ready to take John for the Messiah, *because he baptised*; and they sent to inquire: but John confessed and denied not, but confessed: "I am not the Christ." And, so now, the Holy Spirit *baptises*; and it is expected that this baptism will introduce a spiritual reign on the earth, which is taken to be the fulness of Messiah's kingdom: but his word also confesses: "I am not the Christ."

They still pressed the question upon John: Why *baptisest* thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? (John 1: 25.) For John had promptly answered No, when they asked him if he was Elias: "and he saith: I am not."—(John 1: 21.) Here is a mystery, because the Lord himself said on one occasion: "If ye will receive it, this (Baptist) is Elias which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Mat. 11: 14, 15.) This is understood to affirm that John absolutely was the Elias, whom John positively affirms he was not.—So the

matter deserves investigation. The Lord says: "If ye will receive it;" that is, *if you will understand it aright:* and he concludes the remark, with an appeal to the careful hearer, to mind how he hears this word.—Gracious art thou, O Lord, and full of compassion!—For, in the view of that misapprehension of this word, into which the church has carelessly fallen, he put an admonitory pointer to it, as if to say, "Take care how ye hear. In an important sense, John Baptist is the Elias, which was to come; but a type only of the truly Holy One is he."

Therefore, after his transfiguration, which occurred after John's ministry was closed in death, the disciples asked him a question, with which the learned scribes seem to have puzzled them: "Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" It appears from this, that they, the apostles, had not themselves *received it*, that the Baptist was the true Elias. If they had, they would have answered the scribes so: but they appealed for counsel to the Master: and this is what he gave them and us also: "*Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.* But I say unto you, *Elias is come already;* and *they knew him not*, but they have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise, also, shall the Son of man suffer of them. Then, the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

Our Lord spoke of John, as the Elias come already, I admit; but he also speaks of an Elias, who "truly *shall first come, and restore all things*," which was said after the Baptist's death; and therefore, it could not be said of John.

And now I pray you, dear reader, not to lose patience in this day of hurry and noise; and to fail of industry only in the study of the word of our King; for Jesus must reign, whether you consent or not. And he has spoken a word of deep interest to you and to this age, in that he said: "Elias truly shall first come and restore all things;" and then added: "Elias is come already, and they knew him

not." For, in this way, the Lord Jesus spoke a true word of gospel information to every succeeding age of the world, to the end of time. He spoke it between the death of John the Baptist, the forerunner of his humility, and the coming of the Holy Spirit of truth, the forerunner of the advent of his glory. John had then come, and they knew him not; and even so now the Holy One has come, and the world have not known Him. The messenger of the covenant of the New Testament dispensation, who was sent down from heaven on the day of Pentecost, to bear witness of the exaltation and coming and kingdom of Jesus, has his office to turn the hearts of the children of the promise to the Lord their God; as it is written in Luke of the Baptist: "And he shall go before him, *in the spirit and power of Elias*, to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, *to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*" (Luke 1: 17.) It was in the Holy Spirit that John did minister; which is here called the spirit and power of Elias. This seems to identify the spirit of Elias, with the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit and power of the Comforter, which really turns the hearts of men, and makes ready a people prepared for the Lord's kingdom at his coming: and in this Spirit was John being "*filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.*" (Luke 1: 15.) And thus the Elias, "which was for to come," was on *John Baptist* only and individually, as the forerunnner of the advent according to the flesh; and came, at the exaltation of Jesus, *on all believers*, as the forerunner of Jesus in his coming kingdom of glory, over the risen dead, in spiritual and glorified bodies.

Hearken to his voice: Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.—And think not to say within yourselves: We have Abraham to our Father; (we are believers educated;) for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. O generation of vipers; who hath

warned you to flee from the wrath to come ?—And, now, also the axe is laid unto the root of the tree : therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance ; bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance ; for he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Such was the preaching of the Baptist of the first advent of Jesus : and from that time to this, it is, also, word for word the preaching of the Baptist of the glorious advent, the Spirit of truth, and witness of Jesus our Lord and coming King.

The words of Zachariah, the father of John Baptist, are remarkable,and seem too magnificent, even for the greatest of mortals : but they suit to admiration the office of the Spirit of truth. " Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways : to *give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins.*" (Luke 1 : 76, 77.) John was sent only to the Jews in the flesh, a small people in his short day ; but the Holy Spirit is sent unto the seed of Abraham according to the faith, in all nations during the entire gospel dispensation ; and he it is who eminently gives *knowledge of salvation* unto the Lord's people, *by the remission of their sins.*

It seems, therefore, that not the ancient scribes only, but John Baptist himself, and the Lord's disciples, had in mind one to come, of whom the very last words of the Old Testament declare as follows : " Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord ; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mat 3 : 5, 6.)

These are the last words of the Old Testament. John positively disclaims for himself the fulfilment of this prophecy; but he appears to have expected ANOTHER: and, notwithstanding our Lord declared of John, that he was the Elias, he prefaced the word with an affirmation in the future: "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things." And it is suitable that the coming of the Holy Spirit, to witness for Jesus, and to be the Comforter and Teacher of his people, over these mountains of darkness, and through this vale of tears, should have a type in the prophets; whose words should not be limited in their application to John Baptist alone; but further applied, also, to the *true Baptist of the Gospel dispensation*, "the Holy Spirit of promise."

There are in the Old Testament many prophecies applicable to the coming and office of the Holy Spirit: but few are so specific and accurate in their description, as those which are usually limited to John. These last words, however, of Malachi, and of the Old Testament, are too large altogether for John.

No man is competent to turn the hearts of men to heavenly reconciliation, but the Heavenly Dove only: and, by sanctifying unto the Lord a peculiar people from among the nations, he saves the earth from the curse of the wicked one. But one thing, my reader; let us not fear the end of this world as such. When we are dead, it is *all* nothing to us; and whether it please God to kindle the flames of it immediately, or not, will be of no account to us. No, nor in the day of our death, if one should make us a present of the whole world, even then we should loathe it; because it does not have power to restore the vital breath, nor to give life and old age to the dying. It would be of no value in our esteem, even all its kingdoms. And what if its time, and our times, should come to the full together? Our time being come, the world is of no more use to us; and its time being

come it is of no more use to any body; therefore, we will not fear the end of the world, any more than we would fear death in any form, which a soldier should not do, and least of all a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But "the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord," of which we may escape the fear only through faith in the Lord Jesus, and the turning of the heart to God and his service, under the teaching and sanctification of the Holy Spirit, is the glorious coming of the awful throne of judgment, in which righteous award will be rendered to every soul of man for the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad: of that day the Holy Elijah warns all men to beware; and many hear his voice, and turn and seek the Lord; and sometimes by multitudes in this latter day: insomuch, that as of old, "the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, *whether he were the Christ, or not;* (Luke 3: 15,) just so all the people of many nations are in expectation, and many Christians, yea, multitudes, muse in their hearts of the Comforter now, whether he be the promised King or not, whose reign is to be personally spiritual "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." But the testimony of each is to one that comes after; even Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews, or chosen people of God, whom the Lord will gather with him, from out of all nations, in the resurrection of the dead, and give them an inheritance among the sanctified, the circumcised in heart, in his coming kingdom of everlasting bliss. And they are not chosen according to the flesh, but according to the spirit; and they are chosen not whether they will or not; but because they will and do serve the Lord in spirit and *in truth.*

Therefore, whether I read the Old Testament prophecies of the Spirit of promise, or of the voice crying in the wilderness, or of Elijah to come, I find they centre in one charac-

ter of office, in one and the same period of time, and are suitable to the forerunner of the first advent, and they perfectly harmonise in the Comforter: the *office* is to gather up the scattered sons of Jacob;—*the period* is, in the last time before the great and notable day of the Lord; and I am still more and more convinced, that what John the Baptist was to the first advent, the Holy Spirit of truth is to the advent of glory: and his baptism is to be earnestly sought unto repentance for the remission of sins, lest that other which the Lord will bring with him, shall overwhelm us with anguish, in the lake of fire.

And now, my reader, trust not these pages, on a topic of so deep interest, and holy. *Search the Scriptures.* You have seen the errors of commentators: and I am an humble one among them, having no claim to teach, nor authority, nor gift to be wise in any respect above what is written in the Scriptures; but rather feeling myself condemned by the Scriptures, in that I am a sinful man, and have no hope before the Holy One for any righteousness, or sanctity there is in me, nor for any remission I have already attained; but rather looking to Jesus, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, if by any means, I may attain to the glorious likeness of the Lord, *in the resurrection of the dead.*

Should it seem on examination, that these pages open new truths to the student of the Bible, according to the mind of the Spirit, receive you them according to the measure of faith which the Lord may give you; from the lips of Jesus, learning this: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7: 17.)

God the Lord grant, that while we return to the primitive faith of Jesus and the resurrection, in the kingdom of heaven at hand; the Holy Spirit of truth and love may return to us with primitive simplicity and power; and that while we

earnestly seek to baptise all nations with water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, unto repentance for the remission of sins; we may not be ourselves regardless of that baptism of the Spirit which is *one*; (however that by water may be many, in the apostacy;) and *by* which is the true washing away of sins, and sealing of the hope of the everlasting inheritance.

All Judea and Jerusalem went out into the wilderness, to be baptised of John, in Jordan, confessing their sins, and looking for the coming of Messiah: yet when he came, they knew him not; but rejected and crucified the Son of God.

And even so the heavenly ELIJAH, sent from the Lord in glory, to prepare his way before his final coming, even "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord," "*is come already, and they knew him not;*" (Mat. 17: 12,) and he is now constantly in the deserts and solitary places of our pilgrimage, ready and waiting to meet us, "by the river of the water of life" in the Holy Scriptures, "clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God, and of the Lamb:" as John was by the river Jordan in the wilderness and deserts and solitary places of Judea. And the heavenly messenger is even now with us in the solitary place, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: (That is: there shall be an entire physical and moral renovation of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began;) and *the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;* for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. 40: 3, 4, 5.)

Let us go to the solitary places to meet him; for of a truth he is there; and though the abode of the holy messenger appears forbidding, or at least not inviting, and the sound

of his voice to the flesh is rough, still he comes from our Father's house in heaven, with a message from our elder brother, and we will hear him first in his own retirement,

"All flesh is grass; and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people are grass: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; *but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*" (Isa 40: 6, 7, 8.)

This is to the flesh sorrowful; but to the spirit and to the understanding of man, it is strictly true. Hear the continuation of his cry, and believe, and I have done.

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain! O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: BEHOLD YOUR GOD! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isa. 40: 9, 10, 11.)

This is the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "as it is written in the book of the words of Esais the prophet: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Luke 3: 4.) This is the Baptist of the advent of glory, the Elias which was to come before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. This is the Lord's messenger, the Spirit of truth, and the true Witness of Jesus. Hear Him, with uplifted voice, say unto the cities of Judah: Behold you God! Behold, the Lord will come—with clouds, and his arm shall rule for him. Behold, his reward is with him; and his work before him; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent; and believe the glad tidings.

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